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# FROM WAR TO PEACE

## HERBERT QUICK



Quinn

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# **FROM WAR TO PEACE**



# FROM WAR TO PEACE

*A Plea for a Definite Policy  
of Reconstruction*

*By*

**HERBERT QUICK**

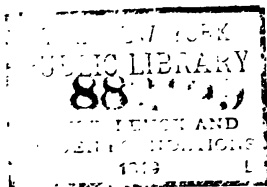
**AUTHOR OF**

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## FOREWORD

During the time which has elapsed between the writing of the first chapter of this book and the last, events have been moving with bewildering rapidity. This tremendous rate of evolution in the great drama of world events will go on between the time of writing this preface and the placing of the book before the public. It is hoped that the reader will take these facts into consideration.

The development of events justifies already the apprehension as to the future expressed by the writer in the earlier chapters. Unemployment has already become a very serious factor in our national life. There are in all probability at this writing a million unemployed men in the United States.

The mania for the destruction of institutions has taken hold of many of the peoples of the earth, and under its title of Bolshevism has struck the world with terror and apprehension; yet nothing really worth mentioning has been done by the American Congress to put out any backfire against the spread of this conflagration in America. A Republican Senator introduced a bill providing for important reconstruction measures—and the bill slumbers in committee. A few days after, a Democratic Senator introduced a similar bill—and that

## FOREWORD

bill also slumbers in committee. The Land Settlement Policy of the Department of the Interior moves slowly, and even if rapidly successful, could not be sufficient. The only measure which seems to have any chance to get through Congress at this session is one which provides for the appropriation of \$100,000,000 for reconstruction purposes, and it may fail.

As I have just stated, events move with bewildering rapidity; but we have the right to expect that they will produce some effect other than bewilderment. I hope that this plea for a vigorous and correlated national policy on reconstruction will not be considered untimely. It is an unfortunate fact that such books as this are not already obsolete; nevertheless, it is a fact, one which the writer sincerely deploras.

H. Q.

Washington, D. C.,  
January 28, 1919.

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# **FROM WAR TO PEACE**



# From War To Peace

## I

### OUR RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX

**A**S this is written the world is filled with the clamors and shaken by the concussions of the mightiest events of all human history. The old-world order has exploded like a bomb. Wrenching pangs of agony run through that body we call civilization. Is it death? Or is it the travail of some great new birth? The least of these immeasurable phenomena are seen in the fact that empires are dissolving, crowns are rolling in the bloody dust, new kingdoms and strange anomalous republics are blossoming like new nocturnal flowers, old peoples are rising from the cerements in which history has wrapped them and stepping forth to walk again among the living, monarchs lately exiled are returning to their capitals, victorious hosts are revenging themselves upon their insulters, might is shifting from hand to hand, kingdoms and fair realms of olden story lie in



desolation more awful than Attila or Genghiz Khan could have imagined, emperors for whom the world just now was not good enough are buying estates in quiet lands on which they may hope to live out in obloquy and disgrace a few years of obscurity, autocrats lie in neglected graves, almost daily the red flag blazes in new cities and floats over new lands, armies mightier than the world ever before saw are laying down their arms and surrendering on fields won by their own valor and on which they stand unconquered, princes skulk into hiding, prisoners are liberated to reign, and the time has come when that text has become a commonplace in which we are told "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree."

There is earthquake, and there is fire, and there is whirlwind, like those which wrapped about the ash-mound on which Job reasoned with his friends; but the spirit which moves them is not in them. It was perceived only when the still small voice was heard uttering the word "Democracy" as the issue joined in the dreadful controversy. Then, and then only, did the Event foreshadow itself. Then only in the World War came that great and marvelous time when

"The slave where'er he cowers, feels the soul  
within him climb  
To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy  
sublime,  
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the thorny  
stem of time."

The immediate future of the world must be its greatest period of fruition, or the death of hope in inescapable frustration. For the first time in history a world war has been fought; for the puny campaigns of Medo-Persia, Athens, the Macedonian Empire, Rome, Carthage, the Saracens or Turks, old Spain, the Crusades, the Goths, Vandals or Huns, or the Napoleonic Wars are almost insignificant when compared with what we have seen in the past four and a half years. They had in them the fate of civilizations, decided mainly by choices as to tyrannies. This war beginning in dimness and confusion of ideas emerged as not only the first world war, but the trial by battle of the very principle of self-government among the peoples. So far from being a contest in which peoples were given no more than a choice of tyrannies, it became a crusade on the part of the free peoples of the world against all tyranny. Democracy became the Golden Apples of the Hes-

perides, the Holy Grail, the Sepulchre of Jesus. That vanished meteor of the storm had been pursued in many dim questionings of the fates which constitute the supreme court of human destiny in many fateful skirmishes in the past—at Runnymede, at Marston Moor, at Waterloo, at Saratoga and Yorktown, at Valmy, at Gettysburg—but those were only interlocutory proceedings in the Great Cause, which was set down for final hearing by the Kaiser in the ferocious attack of 1914 and in which judgment was confessed, and decree accepted after the miracle of the Hundred Days succeeding the second Battle of the Marne.

The victory was complete. Democracy has won. In other wars the victor has made his treaty with such powers as might be in control of the government of his foe, or has demanded the restoration to the throne of some “wronged” monarch; but in this, the man in Washington, whose diplomacy had won for him the spokesmanship of the conquering powers, took the unprecedented step of promulgating a decree of outlawry as to any government except a democratic one. Democracy had vaulted into the saddle, and with the superb audacity of the democracy of revolutionary France demanded democracy for all. It spoke with the

voices of America, of struggling, confused Russia, of the British Empire; with the voice of France, with the voice of monarchical Italy. A thousand years from now the philosophers of the world will perhaps have receded from this event so as to give it that perspective which will enable the beholder to see its true grandeur, its magnificent originality. A thousand years from now thinkers will be able perhaps to appraise the power of the new germinal principle which it gives to the politics of the world. A thousand years from now the world will know whether or not this grandiose gesture of the peoples has made good its promise of a new day for the travailing world. Now nobody knows what we shall see. To think that we are observing the closing of the era of privilege may be the greatest of all errors. It may be only an interlude between evils which we had and others which we know not of. This democracy for which we have fought is as yet but a name to most of the peoples for whom it has seemingly been won. The world has been struggling hitherto with the mere matter of defining it. Now there rests on us the herculean task of applying it. This is what we mean by Reconstruction.

Let us not fall into the abysmal blunder of thinking that democracy has as yet become an art anywhere. We of America, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Denmark and Norway are prone to plume ourselves upon an assumed possession of a certain mastery of this art, the practise of which has now been enjoined upon us by final decree of the supremest Court of Last Resort; but a scrutiny of our institutions shows that we have been experimenting only with the science of democracy, and endeavoring by the clumsy research methods of our politics to know here a little and there a little of its reactions. We have been content with such democracy as was wrung from privilege by the almost purely fortuitous union now and then of sporadically generated democratic impulses. When all the people lift or pull together, they are more powerful than the mightiest engines they are able to build. Our soldiers have learned that men acting in concert can carry cannon to mountain tops and drag great guns through swamps. It is only now and then in history that we see peoples acting in unison for democracy. They did this after a fashion in the French Revolution, and they are doing it in Russia to-day. Both these mighty

events show forth the results of the application of the mightiest force on earth by peoples who know their medium as a science and have not mastered their art. Let Germany, all the new states springing up to appear at the peace table—yea, let the democracies which waged this war to a military and political success—look to it that they master the art as well as the science of democracy, lest they follow the historic course; from Mirabeau to Robespierre, to Marat, to Hébert; from Miliukov to Karensky, to Lenine and Trotzky. For this war has made democracy the Issue everywhere. It has trained on Privilege the guns of the masses and made them skilled artillerists. The masses have been dragooned into fighting for democracy, made to die for democracy, enlisted to bear hunger, thirst, wounds, disease, asphyxiation, poison and corrosion for democracy. Think not that they will cease to act, and to act together for democracy after the war. It will be the very apple of their eye. They will no longer be willing to see it live deformed and frustrate. They will ask when they return, "Is this the democracy for which we fought? Is this the precious treasure for which we ventured our bodies and souls in Flanders, on the Marne, on the Venetian plains, for which we

went like eagles from cloud to cloud seeking prey, dove to the ocean's depths and fought blind battles with sea monsters under, upon and over the sea?

'Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave  
To have dominion over sea and land?'

Is this the democracy for which we fought? No!"

This question will be asked a million times in every land and for generations. If the answer is "no!" look to it; your peace will be Dead Sea fruit turning to dust and ashes in the mouth. We have come to the time when democracy must function, not according to the formulas of clubs, chambers of commerce and philanthropic surveys, but as the people who have fought for democracy demand that it function. Democracy must become an art as well as a science. To make it function as an art is the task of Reconstruction after the war.

## II

### NEW OCCASIONS—NEW DUTIES

**T**HE World War has affected the peoples most powerfully through their military operations; men who have fought and sustained wounds and maimings and seen their comrades die; those who have lost relatives and friends, who have seen the wrecks of men drift back into the port of home; those who have starved; those who have suffered bondage; those who have given of their earnings or their wealth that the war might be carried on; those who have changed their occupations; those who have lived in any of a thousand ways a new life whether in camp, in factory or in the home—and who has not?—have received from it their mightiest spiritual shocks. These things, however, are not the permanent impulses by which the peoples will be affected. On every people will rest a huge load of debt, in some cases so great that the interest upon it will be greater than the total revenues of such governments before the war when taxes rested with a force almost crush-



ing on industry. In such countries as Belgium, France, Serbia and Russia the task of restoration is a most forbidding and daunting one, even to a nation free of debt, and with man-power unimpaired. The peoples of the British Empire and the United States have escaped the actual devastation of the war; but they have carried the financial burdens as they grew too heavy for their brethren in arms. The fruits of their industry are mortgaged to an extent which is unprecedented in history and frightful to contemplate. The adjustment of this burden so as to render it possible for it to be carried without a ruinous strangulation of industry and paralysis of enterprise is already a question which confronts the statesman as a problem of to-day.

A business man exhibited in Washington recently a plan for so preparing food as to preserve without spoilage and in form decreasing to one-tenth its ordinary weight and bulk some of the most important articles of diet of every civilized people on the globe. These perishables by this system could be changed into imperishables; the surplus of one season could be carried over without deterioration; the cargo space required for transportation could be so reduced as to call for one

ship or one railway car where ten are now required. All these things indicated that here is a great invention timed peculiarly as if by providential prevision for a time when the food reserves of the world are exhausted, and its railway cars and ships worn out and destroyed by war. What stood in the way of the immediate erection of plants all over the country for the purpose of doing this divine work of saving and preserving to the world its ordinary wastage, and making of these foods a common thing and every-day barter and sale wherever the trade routes run? Nothing except the exactions which seem to be necessary for the financing of the government in and subsequent to the war. The demands of the nation for the public revenues are already so great that they begin to affect industry as the ancient tax on date trees affected the date orchards. The trees were and the industries are being cut down. "Under the excess profits tax," said these entrepreneurs, "we shall have so much to pay into the public treasury that it will not reward us for our enterprise if we begin this great work of saving and preserving and transporting foods. If we could be allowed free from tax a sufficient revenue to permit the amortization of our investment, we

could go on. Otherwise capital will not be furnished us."

Industry must be permitted to evade this tremendous volume of taxation or it can not redeem us from our bondage to war. Unless industry is enabled to do so that arm which alone can save will be paralyzed. Our revenues must not rest on consumption, because consumption rests on production. These burdens can not rest directly on production, because under such a system there can be no such rallying of production to the colors of recuperation as must come if we pull out of the hole in which we find ourselves. To-morrow must be the day of the statesman. The formulas of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives and of our state legislatures of the year 1918 are now as obsolete as those of the Roman Senate of Cæsar's time. We must consider further hereafter this matter of paying for the World War without burdening either production or consumption.

The most exigent of our problems are those connected with the demobilization of our armies and of our industries. These are in the minds of all of us. War has been for four years the great industry of the world, even in the United States.

Even before we declared ourselves among the belligerents our industries had been transformed. The enlistment and training of our armies and the manning and equipment of our increased navy were only the last steps in a wonderful series of mobilizations which began in 1914. Production, transportation and finance were welded into armaments for the Great Cause. Then came the marshalling in arms. By the very lessons learned in our long delay we were enabled to see the things required of us and rise to the occasion. Our distance from the scenes of combat and the necessity for haste made our task the greatest, perhaps, which was ever undertaken by a nation. We neither underestimated the task nor failed in its execution. We ruthlessly tore our men from their occupations, and we wagered every necessary dollar which could be collected from the stream of wealth as it was produced or raised by mortgaging the future. And now, as our young men are returning to our shores, they will find that their old world in which they had their places and through the passages of which they knew their several ways about has passed away, and that they must find new places in a new world in which they will be like sailors who

have been away on a long voyage, and return to find conditions strange, forbidding and baffling. Machinery has been perfected and adapted to what was done by hand. Women have been enlisted in the industrial army to take men's places, and will make a fierce industrial struggle to retain the places they have learned to fill. The substitutes who and which have taken the places of the men in the army and the navy and in the long line of helpers which runs from the front right back to the old factory or the old farm, they too have been soldiers helping to win the war, and they have their claims upon us. The war has magnified our activities. We have found out how to fight great battles, transport great bodies of men across the sea, and to carry on our industries at the same time. That increase of power must be used in time of peace. We must use every labor-saving machine, every idler who has been drawn into useful labor, every woman who has enlisted, and at the same time we must use the labor of every returning soldier and sailor. We must use productively all the labor and all the machinery which the war has taught us to use productively, and all which has been used destructively. This is on the surface of things. Unless we do this we

face an era of dreadful depression, labor disturbances, agitations, eruptions. We must be as much greater as a nation after the war as the energy developed by the war will make us plus our normal energy of peace. Thus only may we bring to pass the easily-made prophecy that the war will be of such immense benefit to us. Out of the nettle danger we may possibly pluck the flower safety, but if we do it will be only by applying to the problems of reconstruction the same energy, the same self-sacrifice, the same scientific organization that we have applied to the prosecution of the war.

No doubt we can carry the burdens of this war and readjust ourselves to the changed conditions. No doubt there is in the people of the United States, as in every other of the peoples, those great potentialities which the French exhibited when they paid before it was due the great indemnity after 1870. Democracy in industry, in institutions, in transportation, plus wisdom in planning and determination in execution will do it; but no policy of patchwork and drift will serve. We can not come out of this plexus of difficulties carrying our grist in one end of the bag and a stone in the other to balance it.

### III

#### THE PANACEA OF LAND SETTLEMENT

**T**HE North emerged from our Civil War in such economic condition as to enter at once upon a period of business expansion which developed into a boom that strangled itself in wild speculation in 1873. The South which had become a hollow shell economically during the struggle was in a state analogous to that in which several of the nations find themselves now. Its labor supply was disturbed and its labor disorganized. Its economic resources were exhausted. It suffered from political disturbances which retarded its economic restoration. A full generation was required to bring prosperity to the South; and there the word reconstruction connotes almost everything evil.

The North had at that time no serious problem of reconstruction. The states of the Northwest invited the settler to the best land ever offered freely to the settler; cities were building; railroads were extending their tracks everywhere; factories were springing up all over the East. So

great was the demand for labor that our greatest period of immigration from Western Europe set in at about this time. There was no real problem of reconstruction. The discharged soldier had before him such a wealth of choices for employment including self-employment that a little moving about was sufficient to settle any population inclined to drift. The man of stay-at-home disposition could settle into some vacancy on the old farm or in the old town created by the migration of some fellow; while the seeker for adventure, spoiled by the life of camps for the humdrum affairs of his old home, could find a new and vivid life in a struggle with nature quite as absorbing as his four-year contest with men. Him the lumber woods, the prairies, the cow-camps, the long trail to the Pacific Coast invited with a thousand voices. Before the hard times came, not from the war, but from the speculation following the war and bred by our own prosperity, reconstruction was an accomplished fact.

Our soldiers returning from this war will find no situation already worked out for them such as their grandfathers found in 1865. Neither will any other people except the Russians, who, given order and free government, have in Siberia and



the untouched resources of both sides of the Urals quite as good an opportunity as we had at the close of our Civil War. Broadly speaking there is no free land left in the United States. That which is free is at or below the margin of cultivation. It is as dear to the homesteader as Iowa or Illinois land at two hundred and fifty dollars an acre. The United States is fenced up, owned, controlled, lapsed into private ownership; so that the outlet to the prairies and to free lands generally no longer exists. Reconstruction must furnish new prairies for our newly-returning soldiers. This brings up for the first time in critical form in our history the land question.

Land solves all industrial troubles; for it furnishes opportunity for self-employment. Thomas Carlyle once said to Cuyler, an American, "The labor question? You have no labor question in America, because you have a vast deal of land and a very few people." European thinkers have repeatedly expressed the same thought, and uttered doubts as to whether or not our free institutions could long survive the exhaustion of our free lands. Perhaps the time has come with the end of this war for us to furnish the answer one way or the other.

The minds of American statesmen seem naturally to turn to the land as offering the principal solution of our reconstruction problems. It is pointed out that the land of the United States while privately owned so far as it possesses agricultural value, is still to a very great extent either unimproved or only partially improved, uncultivated or partially cultivated only. These great areas may be roughly divided as follows:

1. Arid lands, much of them still a part of the public domain, which may be rendered valuable for agriculture by irrigation.

2. Swamp and overflowed lands, mostly privately owned, which may be reclaimed by drainage.

3. Forest lands from which the timber has been removed, practically all in private ownership, which may be made valuable for agriculture by clearing and draining.

4. Lands scattered everywhere throughout the settled portions of the United States which, in small tracts and large, are held out of use or out of their full use by private owners, either for speculative purposes or to gratify a desire for the holding of lands for its own sake.

5. The so-called "abandoned farms" which are

in the main lands which have fallen permanently or temporarily below the margin of cultivation, but are regarded as having risen above it if placed in proper hands.

Soldiers and other workers—all of whom have equal claims upon the nation economically speaking—who are country-minded, might well be furnished with an ample area of land from these areas so as to be allowed to exercise the priceless right of self-employment. The opportunity is quite as great, considering present-day advantages in transportation, as that afforded by the north-western states in 1865. But competing demands for labor have put out of the question the pioneering of the nineteenth century. American men will no longer labor for a generation to establish a home in the forest; and if they were willing to do so, American women will veto any plan of life which demands that they spend their existence in the dreary drudgery of such a life and bring up families of children to whom are to be denied the advantages summed up in the word civilization; and with all due regard to the splendid qualities of our old generations of pioneers, the American men and women are right about this. The twentieth century has much to offer which can not be profit-

ably exchanged for the log cabin, the remote sod house, or the individual struggle with stumps, stones, droughts or swamps. Moreover, none of these lands are free. They must be bought from their owners, or if in the public domain, they must be taken subject to charges for reclamation which have made some lands so disposed of the dearest lands ever bought by settlers in America. Let us, however, consider these several classes of lands as factors in our problem of reconstruction—for furnishing to our industrially-disturbed people, not only employment but self-employment, not only subsistence but that hope for the future which is the right of every worker in a democracy.

## IV

### THE ARID LANDS

**T**HE settlement of unsettled people on the arid lands of the United States is a subject with which most amateurs and some good thinkers delight to amuse themselves. Many arid lands possess advantages over lands watered by rainfall. The soluble salts in the soil have not been leached out by ages of run-off. The soils possess more of their original stocks of potash, phosphorus, sulphur and other plant foods than those exposed for ages to the action of rain. The same is true also of nitrogen except as nitrogen is accumulated in the soil in humid regions by the action of bacteria in the soil. These facts to some extent justify the real-estate agent's apostrophe to the soil of the dry lands. "Look at the soil," he exclaims. "It is the richest soil in the world! The richness of this land has not been leached out by the washing of ages of rainfall."

But there is another side to the question. There are objectional salts in the soil which are never

found in humid climates, which need to be washed out. Many a farmer in irrigation projects has been ruined by the accumulation in his soil of those mineral salts grouped under the general name of "alkali." In the main, however, the problems which must be solved if settlers on irrigated lands are to prosper, relate, not to the character of the soil, but to economic matters.

While many of the settlers on irrigated lands in the United States have prospered, the statement may be made with some confidence that on the average they have not done well. They are forced to go where there are lands which are irrigable, regardless of other considerations, while farmers locating in humid regions are at liberty to take into consideration such matters as nearness to market, development of that mastery of local problems which comes only from a long experience of the farming population on the ground, established conditions generally in an established community, and that freedom from the necessity of experiments with types of farming, varieties of seeds and the like which when unsuccessful often spell ruin for the farmer. The manufacturer may correct his errors at any time; but the farmer pays with a year of his time and his season's living for

every mistaken choice. Where settlers on irrigated lands can avoid those errors and in some way compensate themselves for that lack of experience which condemns the pioneer to poverty in almost every new agricultural milieu for fully a generation they are safe; but instances of that are hard to discover.

The inevitableness of the failures of pioneers in farming is a matter which is generally overlooked. The long-drawn-out hardships of settlers in the forested eastern third of the United States are generally accounted for by the struggle with the forests themselves; but as a matter of fact the forests gave almost as much in fruits, sugar and game as they took in ease of cultivation. The history of the pioneers on the prairies of Illinois and Iowa and the other prairie states show more clearly the inevitable disadvantages of pioneering in farming. They seemed to be sure of prosperity. Railroads built in to furnish transportation, before the settlements were more than a few years old. The soil was almost the richest in the world. There was an abundance of natural forage of excellent quality and absolutely free to the first generation of settlers. There were no stones, stumps, or natural obstacles to tillage. The land was far

cheaper than that of any irrigation project which comes to mind; and at that very epoch the invention of the steel plow, the reaper, the header, and the Marsh harvester, with many other important labor-saving devices, would seem to have placed these people in an agricultural paradise.

Such, however, was so far from being the case that the majority of the first generation of these pioneers, industrious and enterprising as they were, made utter failures of their farming. They were unused to the climate, which was rigorous. They did not know that of the prairie sod excellent houses could be made, and in the absence of good, cheap building materials, they suffered through the lack of shelter, and struggled to haul lumber and logs over long distances, thus taking time from their work and subjecting themselves to great hardships. Except for bread and meat, vegetables and poultry, their food supply was restricted. There was no sugar to replace that furnished by the maples of the forest, and when sorghum cane was introduced there was no fuel with which to boil it down. There were no orchards from which to obtain fruit, and the first experiments with varieties proved failures; and the sight of flourishing plantations of Northern



Spy and other eastern apples were often seen, not one tree of which ever bore. The mere discovery of the right varieties was in some fruits the work of a lifetime. Winter wheat wouldn't live over winter, and most of the settlers came from winter-wheat producing countries. It was not until Iowa had been settled for fifty years that a variety of winter wheat was found which could be depended upon. Peaches would not survive the hard winters.

The game consisted of birds mainly, and most of the settlers did not know that any of their birds except prairie chicken, quail, ducks, geese and cranes, were good to eat. They regarded with horror that delicious tid-bit the muskrat; badgers, ground-squirrels, and such shore birds as the upland plover and curlew, the meadow-lark and bobolink were not believed to be fit for human consumption. The old squirrel rifle was of little use for prairie shooting and few families had shotguns. The Indians knew all about these food sources, but the settlers' stomachs revolted at the filthy habits of the savages, and the fact that Indians ate a thing was an argument against it.

They thought that they must break the sod in the spring and early summer and let it lie until

the next spring to rot before any crop except a little poor sod-corn and such things as potatoes and beans could be grown upon the land. It was not until Illinois had been completely settled, and Iowa nearly so that the introduction of flax growing for the seed proved that a profitable crop could be grown the first year. The first generation of settlers were handicapped by a whole year of waiting before a money crop could be grown. Then spring wheat for sale and bread, and oats and corn for feeds came to represent the sole type of farming; resulting in the growing of wheat after wheat on most of the fields. Soon this money crop began to fail through mysterious rusts and blights; and it was not until the sons of the early settlers in Iowa were gray-bearded, that the investigations of science found the cause of this poverty-breeding failure of crops in certain fungi and bacteria, and pointed out the type of farming which would cure the evil. In the meantime maize became the great crop, and was sold in Iowa for prices which made it more economical for the farmer to use it as a fuel in the kitchen stove than to sell it. The original settlers had given up in despair and moved on before a permanent system of farming was developed which would enable the

settler to live a life tolerable to an ambitious man.

This long digression is none too long if it shows why the pioneer nearly always fails in farming; and if it is accepted as a note of warning to those who think that the settlement on irrigated lands of the returning soldier and those country-minded people generally who are unsettled by conditions after the war is certain of success. The exact problems of the settlers on the prairies they will not be obliged to face; but the basic fact of ignorance of conditions will exist—and the problems will be all the harder because they are new.

Doubtless the Reclamation Service has at last mastered the crudest and most obvious of their own problems. It may be assumed that the Reclamation Service will not attempt, as has been done in the past, to settle people in remote regions where no market exists for their produce; but it may not be assumed that Congress will refrain, as it has not refrained in the past, from forcing such remote projects upon the Reclamation Service in order that certain states and congressional districts may "benefit" by the money spent for irrigation, and that the country may be "developed." It may be assumed that the Reclamation Service

has learned to avoid that tragic error of the past, the settling of farmers on irrigated lands unprovided with proper drainage. Everybody seemed to forget, when the irrigation systems of the past were reclaimed, that arid lands have not as a rule been provided by nature with any adequate system of drainage, and that when a great supply of water is turned upon undrained lands, whether the water comes from the sky or from a reservoir it turns that land into a swamp. The fact that this water-logging came from seepage which did not appear for years after the water was turned on amounted to a trap for settlers. With the water-logging came alkali. As the water-table approached the surface, the water, carrying alkali, evaporated in the dry air and sun, leaving its poisonous salts behind. Doubtless these problems will in most regions be solved, but until they are—they and many other problems—the settler on the irrigation project will be suffering from the inevitable evils of pioneering.

When irrigated lands are disposed of, they must carry with them the burden of paying for the irrigating plant and its operation and upkeep. The area of irrigable lands in the United States is variously stated; and as a matter of fact can not

be accurately stated. A great deal of land is irrigable from an engineering standpoint, the irrigation of which can not be made to pay. There are private projects now operating on which the annual charge for operation is from ten dollars to twenty-five dollars annually per acre; and on some of them the irrigation company is operating at a loss in the hope that the time will come when the whole plant may be turned over to the settlers. Then ruin will threaten the farmers, for no ordinary agriculture can possibly stand such a burden, plus the lien of the original construction. The point is that irrigated lands often cost the settler more than they are worth, and that the cost of operation is often ruinously high, the result being that the settlers must solve the problems which always confront the farmer in a new region, but he must also carry a crushing load of debt and operating charges.

When the government of the United States makes tragic errors, the plain settler may be excused for doing the same thing. The government has done so in its repeated failures in the past to provide for the drainage of irrigated lands, and many a settler has been ruined by such error. The government has learned this lesson, it is

hoped; but private companies in the business of reclamation have not in any large measure done so, and many of them probably do not care to do so. But the problems of drainage, alkalifying, and the proper type of farming are not the only things to consider. The government in the past has sold to settlers land which was not ready for cultivation, and it has permitted private companies to do the same. A man from the humid region buys a tract of irrigated land thinking that he will be able to begin farming at once, and awakens too late to the fact that it will cost him the price of a fair farm of the same area in the region from which he came, to level it and provide it with lateral ditches. The government has ignorantly entrapped settlers in this way, and private companies are doing it all the time.

Another danger to the settler may be illustrated by the case of an Iowa man who invested all the savings of a lifetime in a tract of irrigated land in the Southwest. A college professor saw him examining the land, and volunteered the information that that particular bit of the earth's surface would not grow crops.

"Why won't it?" asked the Iowan, who felt himself a judge of soils.

"Because," said the professor, "it is black alkali. It is utterly sterile, and always will be."

"That black soil?" said the Iowa man. "Why, you're crazy! I know what black soil will do—for I'm from Iowa. This is just the land I want."

And he bought it. He found that it was as the professor had told him, utterly useless. He built on it a house, and when he found that it was worthless and was offered another tract in exchange, he was insolvent. He had no more funds with which either to build a house or level and prepare for tillage the new tract; and moved to a near-by village and became a laborer. There were tears in his eyes as he told to the professor who had warned him of his utter ruin, and the wreck of his hopes for himself and his family.

Do these things mean that returning soldiers and others whose lives have been unsettled by the war should not be settled on arid lands, the works for the irrigation of which may or may not be constructed by themselves? By no means. But it does mean that the irrigation project may be and often is a delusion and a snare. Often it gives lands that are dearer than good lands already under cultivation. Irrigation is an art under the best conditions; and it should not be undertaken

by farmers who are subject to excessive liens for the construction, or excessive charges for upkeep and operation. A large part of our so-called irrigable lands will not pay as yet for the irrigation. Let us wait until there is a real lack of land before we reclaim it. Let us wait until it will pay; and in the meantime look elsewhere for places for our settlers—places in which the inevitable uncertainties of the pioneer will be lessened.

Where settlers are placed upon irrigated projects—and there are many upon which they should be placed—they should be given guidance and superintendence, like that which the state of California proposes to give to her state settlements of farmers. The “black-soil” man should not be allowed to settle on black alkali. No one should be settled upon a farm until the work of getting it in condition for tillage is well within his means. Housing should be looked after, and so should the proper grouping of settlers in communities. No policy but that of a wise paternalism will succeed. The type of agriculture, the schools, the markets, and the system of credit, all should be looked to. Private irrigation enterprises should be placed under governmental supervision as strict as that which controls our banks. It is far more



harmful to "utter" a counterfeit farm than to pass a counterfeit bill. Let us have no more forgery of irrigated farms whether by the government or private speculators.

The arid lands, therefore, do offer an opportunity for self-employment of the unsettled after the war. They are worth considering as an element in the work of reconstruction; but their utilization is a difficult problem. In solving it the nation will undertake a great work of agricultural, financial, irrigation, drainage, and sociological engineering, in the prosecution of which there is danger that we shall buy dearly what might be obtained more cheaply elsewhere.

## V

### SWAMP AND OVERFLOWED LANDS

**V**YING with the arid lands in attractiveness to those who long to see new avenues of self-employment opened to those who return from the war and all who are industrially unsettled by the war and economic evils which exist independently of the war and its consequences, are our swamp and overflowed lands. Considered purely as lands, in view of their area and the readiness with which most of them may be drained, one would expect the lands reclaimable by drainage to bulk larger in the minds of thinkers than the arid lands; for they lie mainly in the eastern half of the United States where the population is most dense and where their proximity to markets seems to increase their usefulness to both producer and consumer. But the facts that we have a United States Reclamation Service, that irrigation is an experiment that has been tried by the federal government, that many of the irrigable lands are still owned by the United States, while most of

the swamp lands are reduced to private possession, make irrigation the path of least resistance as compared with the reclamation of the wet lands.

Yet, undoubtedly, drainage is the better economic and financial proposition. We have in the United States some 76,000,000 acres of swamps, equal in area to the three states of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. To bring an area of arid lands of equal scope into use would call for the irrigation of lands requiring a lift of water, and an expenditure for construction which would make the most of the irrigated area too expensive for profitable agriculture anywhere in the United States, and much of the area irrigated would be remote from market, and out of the way economically. The swamp lands, on the other hand, are found scattered along the Atlantic Coast, along the Gulf Coast, in the basin of the Great Lakes, and along the entire course of the Mississippi and several of its branches. They lie in the regions of great cities, huge industrial plants, by navigable waterways, and on railway lines. If the federal government should choose to enter upon their reclamation, all that would be necessary in order to make a beginning would be to put on the statute books a law giving the gov-

ernment the right to purchase them, and in case of inability to agree with their owners as to price, to condemn them to the public use of land settlement, upon paying a fair price for them.

As in the case of the arid lands, the average man is disposed to say, "Reclaim it and it is the richest land in the world." There is a large measure of truth in this popular notion. The swamps have received the wash of the uplands, with its burden of plant food, and much of the plant food has remained. They have produced, most of them, great amounts of vegetation, and the soil is rich in humus. Most of them are rich in nitrogen, that most costly element of plant growth. They do not offer, however, farms on which the man unused to the culture of drained land may tickle the earth with a hoe only to see it laugh with a harvest. Many of them are deficient in potash, and obstinately refuse to produce until that element has been supplied. Many of them are mere wet basins in a soil so poor that it will grow no better crops than the same soil which has not been drained. Most of them are acid in their reactions, and need the application of lime before good crops can be grown on their soils.

Extensive swamp areas are composed of peat,

which is not only poor in elements of fertility, but when drained is likely to take fire in time of drought, and burn to the water-line, thus destroying the very body of the farm and turning it into a pond. Such deposits should be considered as sources of fuel, and of the by-products of the destructive distillation of peat. The soil of many swamps actually disappears on continuous exposure to the air through the oxidation of the vegetable matter in it, and the volatilization of its gases. We have had no such critical survey of our swamp lands as to show which of them should be reclaimed, and which should not. That there is a vast area of them, however, which is economically worthy of reclamation for purposes of agriculture, there can be no doubt. The addition of these areas to our cultivated domain, like the reclamation of those arid lands which may at this time be economically brought into use is a national duty.

We should, however, in bringing in the swamp lands, as in the case of the arid lands, consider the economics of the matter and compare these lands with others not now in use or not fully used for the purpose of deciding which afford the best opportunities for the industrially unsettled after

the war. As in the case of the arid lands, there are some wet lands the reclamation of which will cost more than the benefit will come to. Some drainage projects now completed are charged with a very burdensome debt for the construction. Some lands may be drained by leveeing off the flood waters and then keeping the water-table down to the proper point by pumping; and some of these lands are paying profits on the expense; but not every tract so situated as to make such a plan practicable from an engineering view-point is worth the original expense and the carrying charges.

On drainage projects the new settler is presented with the same problems of pioneering as those in the irrigation projects. A new type of agriculture is indicated, with which the settler is unfamiliar, and unless under the best guidance—which itself is never any too well equipped for the task—he will waste precious seasons and incur the dangers of bankruptcy and discouragement before he masters the task which the new land sets him. Where lands are drained which are rendered swampy by the run-off of a great contiguous area, it is often impossible to build ditches which will take care of the water in seasons of

great precipitation; so that while farming is perfectly safe four years, let us say, out of five, the fifth year or at any rate, an occasional year, is absolutely sure to flood the project and present to the settler the question of how to avoid ruin by the loss of one whole year's crop, or perhaps two in succession. The writer could point out drained areas now in rather successful use where this obstacle to success has been met, and only in a small measure overcome. Such a situation will ruin any community of new settlers unless the people have had worked out for them a remedy.

The swamp lands are in the well settled industrial regions where intensive farming and the production of perishable vegetables and truck occurs to the minds of settlers and real-estate dealers as the best type of farming to adopt; but to found settlements of returning soldiers or others as a solution for after-the-war problems on such farming is, in the opinion of the writer, to invite ruin. The vegetable-growers of the country are fully meeting its needs now; and the addition of any large area to the lands devoted to such production would be ruinous to a business already very precarious as to its rewards, and would insure the failure of the new settlements. Staple farm crops

like wheat, corn, the other grains, cotton, dairy products, poultry products, tobacco, vegetables and fruits for canning, dehydration and other modes for the conversion of perishables into staples, and as a constant in the problem, live-stock—these are the things the production of which has always been the basis of all successful farming and always will be. The settlement of swamp lands and all others should steer its course by the light of this experience, and allotments of land should be made on the basis of some adaptation to these types of farming. Above all we should close our ears to the pleas of the “Little-Landers,” who point to Japan and China for proofs that the pocket-handkerchief farm will support the farmer. It will—such a farmer as the Chinese or the Japanese, living as the Japanese and Chinese farmers live. They live in abject slavery to the soil. They work almost night and day. They think of nothing and talk of nothing but food and the stark necessities of life. Americans can not do this, and will not. It is probable that those surveys which show that the small farm does not pay have done the small farm an injustice; but it is only the part of wisdom for us to remember that the verdict of our best experts, like Spillman



and Warren, show that the small farm in America does not pay. We should also consider that unless we give our proposed settlements a life which will, on the whole, pay, the settlements will become a new problem instead of settling an old one. The temptation to choose farms too small for economical operation in irrigated and drained districts is very great on account of the supposed richness of the soil, the certainty of crops, and the high overhead involved in the reclamation; but it is a temptation which should not appeal to those in charge of governmental operations, as no doubt it always will to the average real-estate dealer.

Swamps are the breeding-places of mosquitoes, and mosquitoes are the disseminators of malaria and yellow fever. The old idea that there is something deadly in the emanations from swamps and that their waters are poisonous is of course an exploded error. There is no such thing as the swamp miasma. Nevertheless, the dangers from malaria and, to a limited and lessening extent, from yellow fever in the neighborhood of swamps are as real as ever; and constitute a serious problem for those settling on reclaimed wet lands. Where the drainage project is so large as to do away with the mosquito, and the water in the

ditches is so handled as to prevent their breeding, the drained area is as healthful a place in which to live as any. The sufferings of the early settlers in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and other portions of the Mississippi Valley, from the widely-prevalent malaria will no doubt operate as a solemn warning to the management of any settlement of swamp areas which may be adopted against the insanitary conditions which our grandfathers and grandmothers encountered, and which stamped thousands of families with invalidism. The American settler of to-day will not remain settled in unhealthful surroundings.

The question of sanitation, however, one of the most important things in rural life, only now beginning to receive effective attention, is more difficult in the drained areas than on the arid lands, since it relates to two things in the main, mosquitoes, and to that far more important matter, sewage disposal. This question of rural sanitation should be taken in hand, as it may easily be, by any agency placed in charge of after-the-war settlements.

And this brings us again to the great problem of guidance and superintendence for the benefit of the new settlers. They must not be required

to go through the mill of pioneering—which is nothing but the beating of human beings against the bars of the Unknown. Science and trained superintendence can to an important extent remove the unknown. The settlers on all projects and under all conditions should be organized for mutual help and the strength of combination. They should not be thrown to the wolves of the vegetable, grain, fruit and live-stock markets. They should have unbiased information as to fertilizers. They should be furnished with credit on a broad basis of cooperative strength, both land mortgage credit and personal credit. The best agricultural skill should not only be at their command, but should be in command of their operations. At the best, they will have no easy task—communities of strangers to their conditions and to one another; but out of their weakness might possibly be developed institutions of enormous value to the rest of us. This is among the possibilities of the situation.

## VI

### THE CUT-OVER LANDS

**M**ORE extensive in area than either the arid irrigable lands or the swamp and overflowed lands—greater in area than both classes combined—are those cut-over lands on which grow the leavings of the great lumbering operations which have in great measure destroyed the forests of the United States. They are found in the North, the South, the East and the West, wherever the lumberers have passed and left behind them that waste of stumps, saplings, sprouts, and unmerchantable trees which, torn, shattered and ravaged by the ruthlessness of lumbering, we know as cut-over lands.

The reclamation of this sort of land to agriculture is looked upon by many as a national duty, and in the present era of need of land for settlement purposes is regarded as an opportunity. For settlement purposes some of this land is undoubtedly adapted, under wise management, and with proper supervision and guidance. Much of it, on

the other hand, is unfit for agriculture. Regions might be mentioned which have been settled since the lumbermen deserted them in which farming has not prospered, and where there seems to be no reason for believing that it ever can prosper. Lands which, given time enough, are able to produce great growths of trees, are often totally unfitted for the growing of farm crops. There is no soil which will endure the drain of cropping. For a few years, perhaps, fair crops may be grown; but farms opened up fifteen or twenty years ago are now abandoned because of the failure of the farmer to make a living. Such lands should be reforested for the benefit of the generations who follow us, and who will be obliged to plant trees as we plant corn, or go without timber. No settlements should be allowed on such lands, to say nothing of fostering settlements on them.

Vast areas of these lands possess soils which are light and rather infertile; but which under conditions of greater pressure for farm lands may be susceptible of profitable reclamation and culture. The policy of going upon them now, clearing them and settling upon them those who have become industrially unsettled by the war, including returned soldiers, would seem of doubtful

propriety. Other lands in the cut-over regions have rich soils, good markets and excellent climates, but the stumps are so numerous, so huge and so durable, that the clearing of an acre costs more than any acre of farm land is worth. Some of the cut-over lands are in part swampy, and infested with malaria-breeding mosquitoes; some of them are too mountainous for agriculture; some grow excellent forage when cleared; some give a scanty and worthless growth. Most of them are not well understood as to their agricultural possibilities. In many of them European settlers with the proper experience would certainly make good, as, for instance, the Swiss or Tyrolese in West Virginia or the Ozarks; but the people whom it is proposed to settle upon them are Americans, with no special skill, and those who are to furnish guidance as to much of our cut-over areas—our agricultural experts—have themselves very little actual knowledge of the subject.

Settlement on cut-over lands should, therefore, be preceded by a careful survey of the deforested areas, for the purpose of discovering what the known and demonstrated possibilities of them are in an agricultural way, and what the opportunities are of getting skilled experts to superintend such

settlements. Until such a survey is made, the probabilities of error on the cut-over lands are quite as great as on irrigated, swamp or overflowed lands.

Where cut-over lands possess fertility, and are otherwise adapted to reclamation, they are among the most promising undeveloped areas in our country. They are pleasing to the eye, once the scars of the lumberman's ravages are obliterated; and wherever a grove or the site for the homestead is allowed to develop nature proceeds at once to restore the woodsy appearance which makes a landscape homelike and charming. They are usually well watered, and diversified in appearance. When reduced to cultivation they resemble those charming regions of farming lands which were subdued by our ancestors in Pennsylvania, New York, New England, Ohio and Indiana. They offer great opportunities for self-employment in home making. They are generally low in price, and are held in such bodies as to make their acquisition by the government or any agency charged with settlement very practicable, either by purchase or condemnation. Where they can be acquired at a price sufficiently low, and the cost of clearing is not too great they undoubtedly are better adapted to large

scale settlement than most of the swamp lands or any but a small portion of the irrigable lands.

Swamp and arid lands must be reclaimed in a single operation, in which the settler himself can take no part. Cut-over lands offer to the settler the opportunity to do much of his own reclamation, and thus avoid the heavy overhead charge for the construction of irrigation or drainage works. Moreover, with swamp and irrigated lands there is no middle ground between the lands which are reclaimed and those which are not; but in many of the cut-over regions a partial clearing of the ground makes it valuable for pastures, and the natural decay of the stumps under pasturage conditions actually does much of the work of clearing. This system has been carefully studied, and successfully practised in northern Wisconsin, where clover and grasses grow readily between the stumps when the brush and small growth are cleared out. Settlers are encouraged to go upon these lands on making a very small payment or none at all. Cattle are pastured among the stumps, and the former owner frequently arranges that no additional payments need be made by the settler so long as he does a certain amount of reclamation, a policy which is



advantageous for the settler, and quite safe for the owner, since every acre actually cleared adds to his security. Frequently the settler prefers not to keep draft animals, since most of his work for the first year or so is done by hand, and he can hire horses when he needs them. Many experiments have been made in new methods of clearing, and much progress has been made in reducing this the chief item of expense. Cooperative plans have been worked out for the marketing of the wood of the stumps and the trees left by the lumbermen, so that the work may not all be charged to the cost of fitting the land for tillage.

These progressive things have been under the original initiative of a real-estate dealer pursuing his calling along broad and liberal plans in which there is an exceptional admixture of humanitarianism. Community welfare has been considered, and where settlements of Europeans have been formed, they have never been allowed to become so large as to interfere with the Americanization of the settlers. Credits have been afforded for live stock; creameries and cheese factories have been built; excellent schools have been fostered; public grounds have been reserved for the community centers; meeting places have been built; truck

lines have been established for cooperative marketing and neighborhood buying. The good offices of an admirable state college of agriculture have been freely accepted. The settlers have been given opportunities for improving their stock. Instead of settling the farmers in the usual scattered manner, so as to extend the area of settlement for the purpose of making sales, the settlers have been grouped in communities, thus avoiding some of the isolation of average pioneering. In other words these settlements have had guidance and have accepted an oversight which has been freely offered and has amounted almost to superintendence. The writer knows of no settlements on arid or drained lands, to which the settlers have brought so little in the way of capital, or have reaped a larger measure of happiness or prosperity.

Those who look to the settlement of the unsettled on the cut-over lands seem to believe that the work of reclamation should be done before the settlers arrive, and that ready-made farms be turned over to the settler. If this is done several advantages will be lost. The extraction of the stumps from the land all at once has some bad effects on the land and robs it of some valuable matter. The subsoil and top soil are intermixed, and much of the fer-

tility buried; and the roots pulled out and burned would be a valuable source of fertility if allowed to decay in the soil. The expense of doing this work lays on the settler, since he is the only one to pay it in the long run, an objectionable burden of debt. If he is allowed to maintain himself for a few years by grazing live stock among the stumps, which meanwhile are rotting in the ground, and given the time in which to remove them himself as their removal becomes easy, being at the same time relieved of the burden of making payment so long as he does a certain amount of permanent improvement, he will have an excellent chance to succeed. He will begin his actual farming on a small scale and master its technique as he goes along: to use the prevalent colloquialism, he will be eased into his work in a way which will protect him from errors.

He must have, in a way, a ready-made farm. He must have a house, outbuildings for such stock as he possesses, and enough cleared land for a garden and perhaps some small fields for the growing of a little grain and hay. But more than all this he needs a system of organized help in overcoming his difficulties. He should have the way opened for the marketing of the wood he takes off his land, including the stumps. He must have personal

credit for his live-stock operations. He must have the best methods of clearing laid before him, including the machinery for it and cooperative organization for using such machinery. He must have the chance to get good live stock, good seeds, and he must be taught the best system of farming known for his locality. He must have good schools, good markets, good roads—he must have an organized community. The writer knows of settlers who, ten years ago, moved to these little farms with not more than two hundred to four hundred dollars in money, who are now prosperous farmers, with money in the bank, making a good yearly income, and worth property to the amount of from five thousand to ten thousand dollars. In the meantime their children have been receiving good practical educations, and the whole family has lived an interesting community life. The whole family has risen in intelligence every year through a constant study of its farm and neighborhood problems, and every year its members have become better Americans and better individuals. No settlement project on any sort of land can be considered successful unless these things take place. Under proper guidance and superintendence they will take place if the economic basis be sound.

## VII

### CONSIDER THE ABANDONED FARM

**T**HERE is, or for a long time there was, an impression abroad that large tracts of land once under cultivation, have been abandoned by their owners and may be obtained by any one desiring once more to subject them to occupancy, for little or nothing. This is not and never has been strictly true. These lands are owned, and the persons desiring to try their agricultural fortunes upon them must buy them, often for much more than they are worth. New England is supposed to be the region par excellence of these so-called abandoned farms; and it does possess many of them: but they are found in various parts of the United States as far west as and even beyond the Mississippi. They consist of lands the fertility of which was overestimated when they were first brought into cultivation, which were of such a character that their fertility was exhausted after a few years of culture even with good cultivation; which were ruined by erosion, or their fertility mined by bad husbandry; or, most important of

all, which fell below the margin of cultivation when the fertile and easily cultivated lands of the West were opened up through the building of the western railways. Some of them have again no doubt risen above the margin of cultivation through the rise in price of western lands and the consequent burden of land values resting on the western farmer, and because of a variety of other reasons, including the results of the improvements in agricultural practise.

Most of these lands which are worth farming are in need of some sort of heroic treatment, often the liberal application of lime, followed by scientific tillage and the application of commercial fertilizers. Returned soldiers and the industrially unsettled generally should not be located on these lands except under guidance and supervision which would give them the benefits of the best practise, including community organization especially in such matters as training, credits, and co-operative buying and selling and breeding. In all cases the lands themselves should be made the subject of a thorough agricultural survey before settlement, in order that the fatal mistake, than which few are more tragic, of placing people on unproductive lands may be avoided.

That the old abandoned farms may be profitably tilled has in many cases been shown by experience. Some regions have been practically abandoned through the operation of deep-seated sociological causes. The abolition of slavery and the economic exhaustion of the South is one of these causes; and in the East the amazing growth of the cities, the cheap farm products of the West, and the manifold advantages of city life in a region teeming with flourishing towns and cities caused the abandonment of cultivation of millions of acres which once fed our forefathers. One does not have to carry his explorations very far in the Atlantic slope states to find among huge trees which have reforested the ground, the old chimneys, the stone walls which divided the fields, the starveling remains of the shrubbery which decorated the grounds, and other rather melancholy remains of the farms of which Whittier and Emerson wrote. They have been abandoned because the descendants of those who occupied them found life on them too stern and profitless as compared with that better existence which was promised by the cities and towns of the same regions and by the new farms and cities of the West.

Sometimes one finds one of the old farming

families which has clung to the lands, and making use of the old-time energy and frugality of their race and the newer opportunities and the more recent knowledge, is winning honorable profits from the land; but in the main the country people of these regions have forgotten how to farm. Somehow they have lost the stern purpose which holds one's nose to the grindstone of life; and the bushes encroach yearly on the narrowing fields. Something new in the way of agricultural organization, or a new race, is required to bring these old lands back into productiveness, where it is possible for this to be done.

In many places the European immigrant is successful, where the American of the old stock has shown that he is, without some new impulse, a failure. To these strangers to our soil the opportunity to work one's own lands, no matter what the disadvantages may be, acts as a stimulus to unceasing toil, which, accompanied by frugality, brings a success greater than the same laborers could have won in the Old World. There will be, no doubt, among our industrially unsettled, many of this class. It may be that Americans through proper planning, guidance and supervision, may be enabled to accomplish similar results. It seems



probable that there are large tracts of land which can be redeemed by simple and easy changes in the mode of husbandry. In so far as these causes are found to be operative, the abandoned farms offer opportunities which should not be neglected.

In the main they lie in regions of great and homelike charm. They are accessible to great cities, and educational and social advantages go with them. Their markets should be the best in the United States, and by proper organization might be made so. Usually they are well watered, and their climates are good. On many of them are the remains, sometimes in a fair state of repair, of better houses and barns than the farmer in the new lands can hope for save as the result of a long struggle.

In some regions these farms are scattered about in such a manner that some difficult problems in organization would be presented, but in other places these lands may be bought in large bodies. Many of them are for sale for prices lower than the value which their improvements would possess were the lands themselves of value; but it should never be forgotten that good houses and barns are worthless except as needed adjuncts of good and productive lands. Many of these lands seem to be

well adapted to stock-raising; but they are in regions in which no organized live-stock markets exist. In fact the localities have lost agricultural adjustment with the world. The railways have ceased to serve farming. No such special rates and privileges as are given to the western stock-grower and grain-raiser are in existence. Nobody but the agricultural colleges and the county agents seems to care whether farming prospers or not. In Iowa, for instance, a corn-grower ships from the West a carload of steers which are "fed in transit." The eastern farmer has no idea as to what this term means. It means that the steers are unloaded at the station nearest the farm, driven to the yards of the farmer, fed for a few months on the corn and forage grown on that farm, and then reshipped to the market as a part of the original shipping transaction. Their journey is broken long enough to turn them from feeders into fat steers. This case is cited merely to illustrate the fact that the settlers on the old lands of the East will be faced by many problems which their western brethren have solved, or have had solved for them. Nevertheless, the abandoned farms offer many very promising opportunities for the settlement of the industrially unsettled; but unless it is

done with statesmanship it should not be undertaken.

They are low enough in price, if properly bought, so as to seem available for live-stock raising in regions where meat is scarce and high; but this industry requires large farms—larger than those old tracts which satisfied the New England or New York farmer before the Civil War. This means consolidation of holdings. The planting and successful maintenance of good pastures is a work which in itself demands skill and science in these regions in which it has not been generally studied; and this skill and science the people to be located on the lands do not possess. The advantages of the abandoned farms, once the difficulties to which I have alluded are overcome, are obvious. They may be secured at prices lower than any other cultivable lands in the United States; and thus, once the possibility of successful farming is established, the settler will escape that burden of overhead charges from which the purchaser of high-priced lands, or the settler on drained lands or irrigated lands, must inevitably suffer. They are ready now for some sort of cultivation; and well-planned operations ought to bring in to the settlers a living from the start. They are so situated that a host of our returning soldiers, and

those economically unsettled by the war, will feel at home on them, and will not have to undergo the expensive transportation and the sense of isolation from their old associates which must be expected as likely to produce their effects on the morale of settlers in remote places under new surroundings, especially upon those called upon to practise a form of agriculture which will be to them practically a new art.

The abandoned farms are a valuable asset; but they must be bought very cheaply, and farmed skilfully. A combination of intensive farming with extensive husbandry should be worked out—and no doubt can be—which will redeem these neglected acres to national usefulness. Some privately operated projects give us a hint as to how this may be done. An area of a thousand acres is in mind, which gives employment to a hundred families, and produces a gross income of nearly a quarter of a million dollars annually. It has two hundred acres or more under overhead irrigation with its accompanying intense cultivation—an intensity which shades off into such crops as potatoes and corn grown by ordinary methods. This diversity of system gives employment in all weathers, and produces a balanced effect on the activities of the enterprise. One can imagine a super-

intended settlement organized along similar lines, extending from hothouse vegetables and irrigated gardens to root crops, small fruits, orchards, grains, tobacco, and finally to great pastures on which cattle and sheep are grown, abundant opportunity for the development of individual enterprise in various directions, and a multiplicity of products which employs all labor all the time, and cuts down the probabilities for a disastrous failure.

It is not suggested that the abandoned farms offer the only nor the best sites for such enterprises; but simply that they should not be left out of the reckoning. The thought is that unless that efficiency of method is applied to the settlements which have developed the private enterprise referred to, the settlements are likely to increase our economic difficulties rather than lessen them. Most of the lands available are either at the margin of cultivation, or not much above it. The writer has seen a generation of unguided farmers fail on the richest land in America which was either homesteaded or bought for practically nothing; he hopes to be spared the contemplation of another generation, to whom the nation owes a great debt, failing on lands bought at a high price, for purchase, drainage, or irrigation.

## VIII

### IS LAND SCARCE

**B**Y a citizen of a state in which the land, the superficies of that planet out of which all men are formed and into which they are merged at last in dust, is the common property of all, the question would inevitably be asked, were he presented with the question of returning the industrially unsettled land, "Where lies your difficulty? Why drain swamps? Why construct great irrigation works? Why reclaim cut-over lands? Why bother with abandoned farms? I am only newly come among you; but it is plain to me as it must be to you that the land all about us is not fully used. That which is under cultivation is but half tilled, for the most part, and there are great areas in the most thickly settled portions of the United States which are not tilled at all. This land, surely, was not made for the children of men, as your Bible says, to be kept wholly or partly out of use by some of the children of men. The first task of enlightened statesmanship, it seems to me, is to open the

land all about us to the willing user, and to stimulate its fullest use."

Such questions as these have often been put to the American public; but conditions have always prevailed which made no institutional answer necessary. Is it certain that those conditions will prevail much longer? Is it not possible that out of the seething agitations set in motion by this war conditions are arising which will force an answer, not only in Europe, but in America? The rural phase of the land question is perhaps not its most important aspect economically; but it is its most obvious one. Students of the matter have, however, for years seen how such vital urban matters as terminals, water-fronts, transportation facilities generally, factory development, slums, sanitation, and even such things as corruption in city government, depend on the conflict between land ownership and the public interests; and mining and lumbering conditions rest upon it primarily. We are here, however, dealing with its relation to settlements of farmers.

The value of land in the United States has in some regions declined during certain periods; but taken as a whole its history has been one of rapid and almost continuous advancement. The selling

price tends constantly to outrun the productive value of the land. A Chicago capitalist now engaged in amusing his declining years with agriculture in a rich farming region within twenty-five miles of Chicago told the writer the other day that he considered land in his neighborhood cheap at two hundred dollars an acre. In the region of Champaign, in the same state, he said, it is selling for three hundred dollars an acre. Fifteen years ago the writer was told by a Chicago business man that his business policy had for some time included the constant purchase of Illinois farm land. "Whenever I can get it for one hundred dollars an acre or less," said he, "I buy it if I have the money." The writer's father was a farmer in Iowa, and often prior to 1880 spoke of the fact that land in his old home county of Cayuga, in New York, had sold for fifty dollars an acre. "It will never be worth that much here," said he; and he sold land in Iowa in 1881 for twenty-five dollars an acre; but land in Iowa now brings as much as that of Illinois. These instances are merely illustrative of an almost universal tendency. Where there have been declines in land values, there is a tendency for the ever-increasing pressure of the desire for ownership to check such declines even



in the face of stationary or declining productivity, and restore old values.

This is not in fact the pressure of population on the land area of the United States; but the effect of several things which stimulate a desire for land ownership as distinguished from the use of land. The area of Iowa is something like 55,000,000 acres; and the advance of this land in fifty years from five dollars an acre to \$150 an acre represents an increment of about \$8,000,000,000. The increase has of course been vastly greater than this; and the average capitalist has not been slow to recognize the possibilities of profit in land ownership, all over the agricultural regions of the United States. He has not only recognized them, but he has acted upon them. His desire for land has not been that of a land-user; and agriculture has always been secondary in his mind to the profits of speculation. It is the land speculator, not the farmer, who has bid up the price of farm lands until they constitute a stone tied about the neck of husbandry.

Another fact which affects the situation is the prevailing fashion among well-to-do city people for the ownership of farms. This is not always a bad thing; for in some neighborhoods city land

owners have been very useful to the countryside in their influence on agricultural practise; but in many of the richest portions of the country this fashion and the tendency of the farmers themselves to convert the inflated values of their farms into money or interest-bearing securities, or to rid themselves of the burdens of husbandry by assuming the rôle of absentee landlords, have placed much more than half the farming lands in the hands of tenants, mainly occupying the lands on a year-by-year tenure—a lease which amounts to a criminal conspiracy between the landlord and the tenant—as the late Mr. Henry Wallace used to say—to rob the land.

There is no need for any enlargement on the subject of the importance of advancing land values—it is written large in the economic history of the nation. It has given us the worst of our financial panics; but it has been the foundation of most of our large fortunes and of the vast majority of those smaller competencies which allow people to live without work. In so far as it affects the farmer it tends to divorce him from the land and convert him into something else. Its bearing on the question under discussion lies in the fact that it has resulted in a system of tenant farming far

worse than any in Western Europe, and worse than that of Ireland ever was. It leads to the impoverishment of our lands by bad husbandry enforced upon the tenants through cutthroat leases in the making of which nothing but the returns from the land for a year or so are considered. It makes mere ownership in tracts, the larger the better, more profitable than any use. It surrounds our cities with belts of uncultivated land larger than those productive farms which surrounded ancient Babylon and which were relied upon to supply the city in case of siege. It is satisfied with any husbandry which saves trouble while the land values creep up. It monopolizes more land than would be required to give a home to every country-minded soldier or sailor of our armies.

Now these values do not result from anything done by the speculator: they arise from the development of society. They are social values, not individual values. Morally they belong to the public, not to their owners. The world is evidently entering upon a great era of redistribution of lands. Estates are in process of confiscation from the frontiers of Germany to the Pacific Coast of Siberia; and the whole question of the rights of man to the use of the soil are undergoing re-exami-

nation. Are we to be exempt from this agitation in America? One would think that in a country which started with so general a distribution of land as we did half a century ago, and in which at this time in some of our richest agricultural states more than half the farms are tilled by tenants under the worst leases in the world, the probabilities that we shall catch the European infection to the extent of making the land question of some importance are rather strong.

Something must be done to stop the steady increase in land values. Lenders of money on farm lands have long since learned that it is not safe to lend on some of our farms even half their market price. They recognize the fact that on these high-priced lands such a loan, while not large enough to be unsafe in case of foreclosure, is so large that the payment of the interest is so heavy a load on the farmer that it tends to make foreclosure an unpleasant probability. Not one farmer in a hundred can buy these lands and pay for them out of their produce; and many of the sales are made to buyers who feel that while farming them under such a heavy overhead may be a losing business, the holding of them for the increase in value will in all probability enable the buyer to recoup his losses out of some later-coming victim.

Our national debt has reached proportions of which the statesmen of past ages could never have dreamed; and other nations are worse off than we. The governments are passing into the hands of parties struggling after democracy. It will not be long before the peoples staggering under their loads of debt will ask why they should be taxed on what they eat, drink, wear and use, while owners of the land surface of the earth, every penny of the value of which results from institutions, if improvements be left out of the reckoning, and not from individual efforts, are allowed to remain untaxed or taxed lightly. When that question arises, it will not be easy to localize; and when it is adequately answered, the day of the land speculator and the absentee landlord will be over. When land speculation is once ended, the burden of advancing values upon agriculture will be lessened and largely removed, and there should be no need to go into the wilderness or very far afield for homesites for every man in the United States who wishes to engage in agriculture.

## IX

### THE AREA OF FARMS

**P**RACTICALLY all the governmentally regulated land settlement of the United States hitherto has been based on one of the crudest of errors as regards that vital factor in agriculture, the area of farms. Our original homestead law assumed that every farm should consist of a quarter section of one hundred and sixty acres; though it dealt with lands varying greatly in their capacity to support population. Some of these lands required so much labor for reclamation that the average farmer of moderate means could not hope to subdue so large a tract in many years. Vast regions of timber lands were not available for farms at all, and the homestead law was used as a mere device for obtaining title for lumber companies, which placed their tools and employees on the homestead claims for purposes which were practically larcenous. The same is true of past and even present practises indulged in by stockmen for obtaining title to range lands.

The quarter-section homestead was of about the

right size for the prairie states possessing a humid climate and even here in order that settlers might have larger claims in the subhumid climates, Congress enacted the timber claim law which under the farcical idea of supplying a prairie country with timber gave to the claimant the right by the mere planting of trees to secure title to an additional quarter section. Under correction I venture the statement that not a single one of these plantations ever gave any region a stick of merchantable timber. The settler who knew nothing of forestry was allowed without guidance or instruction to plant trees in climates and on soils unfavorable to trees—one of the most monumental instances of legislative inefficiency in all the rich history of the subject.

The result was that the sizes of farms were to some extent properly readjusted in those dry regions in which trees would not grow! In the good farming regions the growing of trees was possible, but no good was done because of lack of inspection and even of legal requirements as to varieties of trees and mode of culture; and even if trees had thrived—which they practically never did—their production would have entailed an economic loss, since the lands were too valuable to be

devoted to the growing of even the best timber. The law simply enabled the settler to take up more land than was proper for the average family.

Farther out in the more arid regions the conditions were such as to make it impossible for any settler to support himself on even three hundred and twenty acres of land. The so-called Kincaid law opened a portion of the country to settlers enabled to homestead a section of six hundred and forty acres—where they could find a whole section unpreempted; but these lands differ greatly in desirability. On some of these Kincaid homesteads the Federal Land Banks refuse to make loans because of the fact that on so small area no man can support his family and pay his interest and amortization payments; but in proper cases loans will be made to enlarge these six-hundred-and-forty-acre holdings so as to bring them up to the size which is regarded as economic agricultural or pastoral units.

Looking back upon this history of bungling we can see that if a survey had been made of each parcel of land, and the size of the homestead had been adjusted to the needs of each family of settlers, our public domain would not have been squandered like the estate of a spendthrift, our



timber lands would have been disposed of as forest lands or retained in public ownership, our arid lands would not have tempted generation after generation of settlers to risk their all on that historic gamble in which the government betted the settler a quarter section of land against sixteen dollars that he couldn't live on the land five years—a sort of gambling which actually tempted wave after wave of settlers to their ruin as truly as the roulette wheel tempts the gambler to risk his all on the turn of the wheel; but in the case of the emigrant it was his government which held out false hopes; it was his government which said to him that it was a home and a chance to make a living which was offered him, instead of a life almost foredoomed to failure. The story of the ruined homesteaders has been told often, but never adequately. The lands on which they settled have in the main been found good for certain purposes, and great regions are now occupied by prosperous populations which have succeeded to the titles of the men who dragged wives and children over the frontier to lives of poverty and failure and repression and ignorance and loneliness to wrestle with drought and blizzards and hot winds and lack of markets and grasshoppers and old tra-

ditions and mistaken selections of crops. On a deserted sod house in the West was posted a placard found by a later comer reading as follows: "A hundred miles from timber; five hundred miles from coal; fifty miles from school; a million miles from church; ten miles to water, east, west, north, south, up, or down. Gone back east to live with my wife's folks. God bless our home!" Typical American monument to a national crime!

No such mistakes can be tolerated in the new settlements of the industrially unsettled in the period following the war. The size of the land holding should be economically adjusted to the physical conditions. The stockman should have broad areas of arid lands, mountains or pasturable forests, on which the forage problem should have been solved; and he should be given guidance and superintendence so that he may not fail through avoidable error. The settler on cut-over lands should be saved from the error of taking on more than a man can do; and the best practise in gradual reclamation through pasturage and the rotting of the stumps and roots should be imposed upon him as an economic requirement; as should complete reclamation if that is best. On irrigated lands the settler should have the benefit of the mistakes of

the past and be protected against seepage and alkali-fying; and he should not be placed in some remote region without adequate markets. On all lands the crushing overhead charge should be avoided; but it should be remembered that on a long-time obligation it is what a settler can produce and advantageously sell that counts rather than what he pays for the land, and it will be far better to place settlements on good lands near markets, where there is a settled society even though the price of the land be relatively high, than in any place which is either remote from such advantages, untried as to agricultural character, or new to agricultural practise.

Every cooperative agency which has been found valuable should be made a part of a thorough community organization; and such organization should be an integral part of the plan of settlement. Field crops, farm practise, markets, schools, opportunity for religious organization, a required course of study in the life undertaken, definite programs in the matter of breeding as to every animal kept on the farm; all these things should be looked after in a truly paternal spirit which should work through clubs and associations of the settlers themselves. The size of the farm

should be fixed, not on the theory that every man should have the same right as another to an area which he may sometime be able to sell at a profit; but each should be given what, taking into account the family, the character of the soil, and the type of farming, is best adjusted to the settler's needs.

A middle-aged woman in New York City recently applied to the writer for advice as to how she could obtain a farm. She has lost two sons in the war, and she has a little grandson who, when she is out of work, is confined to their small apartment, not even being allowed to go out into the hall. She is willing to do anything to get out on a farm. This seemed to be one of those numerous cases in which a town-dweller in the noise and soot of the city has built up a vision of farm life derived from reading and loose talk—cases in which the kindest thing to do is to dissuade the dreamer from any attempt at realization; but further correspondence with this woman discovered the fact that she has had experience in farming. She has plowed, she has cared for stock, she has been accustomed to outdoor work. In a properly organized settlement she would be a useful citizen. She would make the dresses of the farm-

ers' wives and help them in the rush of their work, living mainly at first on her allotment from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Division of the War Insurance Bureau. She would make most of her living on her little farm and meanwhile her grandson would be growing up a farmer. Her dream would come true; but it can come true only under guidance and supervision. Her holding of land would then be carefully chosen so as to be convenient to her future activities, and would be of a size which would give her pasturage for her stock—a little larger than she could till so as to be big enough for the grandson when he comes of an age enabling him to put the whole tract into actual intenser cultivation. Such cases as this—cases as various as the fortunes and abilities of individuals and families—would call for the wisest sort of control, but such control is not unobtainable. In the area of the farms, in the regions selected, in the types of farming favored, it would be dealing with the very lives of the people; but it would enable us to avoid the throwing of helpless people to the wild beasts of misinformation, ignorance, climate, desert and desolation as we have done in the past.

No settlement should be made anywhere until

after a trustworthy soil survey, as well as an economic study of the conditions, shall make possible the allotment to each settler that area which will constitute a farm, and at the same time shall avoid the error of turning the settlement into a nursery of land monopoly as the society develops.

## X

### STATE AND NATIONAL CONTROL

**A**NY land-settlement policy set up under this national exigency will be a great and growing organization; and it will have a tendency to extend itself and become permanent. The state of California has entered upon a policy of land settlement already, impelled thereto not by the exigencies of the war, but by the problems of peace. Other states are studying the matter and preparing to follow suit. What we are here discussing is no small thing—it is the beginnings of great things. Therefore it is enormously important. It is nothing more or less than the passage from the old haphazard, “Uncle-Sam-is-rich-enough-to-give-us-all-a-farm” policy, through the better considered, but imperfect methods of the Reclamation Service, to a matured land policy. The old slapdash methods should be definitely discarded; and whatever is done should be the summation of the ideas of the best economists. In other words, a matured land policy should possess maturity.

It will go down to utter damnation if that evil thing in American politics called "pork" is not eliminated from it—absolutely eliminated. Already the seekers after pork are preparing to make their onslaught upon Congress with great areas of "the richest land on earth" ready when given the merest touch of the hoe to burst out into hearty ha-has of harvest. Every arid waste, every gravelly forest, every quivering swamp, every sterile moor, every remote valley, every unsuccessful reclamation project, every holding of stony steeps, every sort of unprofitable estate everywhere will seek its market when the government enters the field as a buyer of lands for the returning soldier and those industrially unsettled by the war—and of these there will be millions. Pressure will be exerted on legislative bodies, and the legislators are entitled to a counter pressure from those who desire the system to be set up, not for private profit, but for those patriotic reasons which have actuated the American people during the war. If we can carry over into reconstruction those fervent passions for the public good which have been the most glorious by-product of the war we shall see this land policy established on the right basis—not otherwise.



The first question to be settled is this: Shall the new settlements be governmental only, or shall settlements be fostered by the government in co-operation with private land companies which are now, or shall offer to become, engaged in the work of colonization?

And the next great question is: Shall the governmental work be done by the federal government, or by the state governments, or by collaboration between state and federal activities?

Let us examine the second question first.

There is no longer any practical conflict between the strict constructionist and the broad constructionist theories of our national government. The statesmen of the South still regard themselves, occasionally, as strict constructionists; but they have been swept from the old constitutional moorings by the development of the vast energies of the federal government which have reduced the states to the status of mere municipal corporations, in the main, to whom no one looks for anything very important in the realm of institution-building. Everybody, by and large, looks to the United States government to do everything. Shall women vote? Let the federal government say. Shall we have prohibition? Put the matter up to Congress.

Are the roads poor? Ask Congress for a system of public roads. In so far as the Constitution is ever invoked as the repository of the great treasure of state sovereignty, the invocation comes from somebody who wishes to obstruct something. South vies with North in calling on Uncle Sam when it is desired that something be done. The time is coming under the inevitable development of our institutions when the states will be shorn of all power to resist the doing of anything which the federal government wishes to do—and that will probably be a good thing; but shall the states therefore become mere shells of states? Shall the federal government do everything?

I hope not. There are so many things that the states can do so much better than the federal government can do them. The state needs no protection against the encroachments of the federal government so long as Congress keeps in mind the line of demarcation according to correct governmental practise between local and general control. A study of the problem before us has convinced the writer, and I hope will convince others, that the settlement of the industrially unsettled on the land calls for collaboration between the states and the nation.

To each state the problem of the returning soldier is a matter of intense local interest. There should not be a state in the Union to whose citizens it does not appeal in the most vivid manner. The states have vied with one another in the patriotic endeavors which have sent out our great army, now returning victorious, after triumphs over the soldiery of the greatest military power the world ever saw. Each state has felt pride in the fact that in an army superior, perhaps, to any ever sent out by any nation, certainly equal to the best arrayed against the hosts of Germany, its young men have proudly borne their part. Each state will feel a sense of shame if any of these men are put hereafter in the position of saying truly that they went to save the world, did the work of heroes, and returned to find opportunity shut against them in the state which sent them forth. Each state will desire to keep as citizens its own heroes—and that is as it should be. No state should allow necessity or the superior patriotism of another state to eject or entice these young men from their borders. And to every person who has stayed at home, but whose employment is found disturbed by the effects of the war, each state owes a duty which it should discharge with quite as much

punctiliousness, if not with quite the same pride, as the duty to the returning soldier. That widowed woman whose two sons have died in the war, whose little grandson is a prisoner in an apartment house—does the state of New York owe less to her than to a strong young man who has been in the trenches? And she typifies the civilian who has been unsettled by the war.

In each state, therefore, will be found those groups of citizens who feel the incentive to action in the matter of getting for these young men good land at a price which the business of farming will justify, and who will assume as a patriotic duty the work of seeing that such action is taken that the settlers are given those opportunities which their conditions demand. The states will feel a generous rivalry in promoting their land settlements. They will, also, bring to the primary questions of settlement a local knowledge which is indispensable to success. Is a tract offered for settlement? There are men in the state who will understand its merits and demerits. Is a farm of a certain area proposed? In the state will be found those who will know whether or not area is too small or too large. The state understands its own lands. It knows what they are worth. It under-

stands the local problems. So with the people settled on the lands: they will better adapt themselves to conditions in their own state, and to which they and their associates are accustomed. No doubt there will be much of emigration from state to state, and many who will prefer to emigrate; but each state should feel a deep pride in the endeavor to hold its own citizens while opening the door wide to the citizens of other states.

On the other hand, the general government can not allow this matter to pass out of its hands, if for no other reason than the uncertainty of state action. Fortunately cooperation between the state and the nation is a thing which has been shown possible and which has been successful on a large scale; and that, too, most successfully in the field of agriculture. It has been suggested by some of our best economists that the state can do no less than to furnish the lands for these settlements, and that after the settlements are made, the future should be placed in the field of cooperation between the state and the nation. The state has its college of agriculture in close touch with every locality, in part supported in its work by the nation through funds administered by the Department of Agriculture at Washington. The county

agent is an agricultural employee, paid in part by the Department of Agriculture and in part by local agencies. The Department of the Interior at Washington has multifarious duties to the farmers who have settled on the public lands and on private lands reclaimed by the government, and its work calls for cooperation with the state colleges, and the agents of the Department of Agriculture. The Department of Labor has made laborious researches into the labor conditions which confront us, and must assist in the solution of the problems under consideration. There is already a network of interlaced state and federal activities either concerned with the problem or ready to be mobilized. The machinery is already in existence for handling the land-settlement task, when the states take the necessary steps for placing the land at the disposal of the enterprise.

The state, too, will partake in the work of carrying it on; but the federal government must exercise general supervision over it, and must establish the system. If any state will not do this, then let that state be passed by. My state has plenty of opportunity for the returned soldier, and for that numerous class among my fellow citizens who will be unsettled by the process of reconstruction, and

I hope that we shall show ourselves public spirited enough to go into partnership with the general government in its land policy, assuming that the federal government invites us; but if we do not, then we can not complain if other states with more enterprise get the settlements. Let the federal government once establish the principle, however, that these settlements will be placed in every state which acquires and offers the lands at a reasonable price and of demonstrable capacity for the support of a farming or pastoral population, and I venture to predict that no state will allow itself to be left out if it can legally enter in. I believe I know the American state too well to be deceived in the matter. It is up to Congress. Tell the states that they must enter into some sort of partnership with the nation, and the question will solve itself through some sort of cooperative endeavor.

## XI

### THE QUESTION OF TITLE

**T**HE state of California has adopted certain policies which prevent the settlers from exercising the right of free alienation of the lands allotted to them. In other words, the settler goes upon the land to farm and not to sell out whenever he gets a chance to make a penny or to gratify a mere caprice for a change. This policy is meant to eliminate from the land-settlement psychology the element of land speculation. No land policy can ever rest on the proper foundation—the basis of production and farming for production only—until this element of land speculation is eliminated.

It is difficult for the average American, so ingrained in our minds is the thought of selling land at a profit instead of working upon it for a living and incidental profit, to realize that land speculation is the bane of American agriculture. It, and not the profits of landlordism as landlordism, has converted the best agricultural regions of the United States into lands of destructive tenant



farming from regions of home-owning farmers. It has boomed the price of lands until the burden of land values often rests with crushing weight on the farmer. It is a force which operates daily in the direction of divorcing from the ownership of the soil the men who work on the soil. Scatter on the street to-morrow a handful of precious stones, and they will next day be in the possession of poor people mostly—those who happen to be passing when they are thrown away; but by next week they will be in the hands of people who can afford to own diamonds and rubies. So it is and as a matter of history has been with our farm lands; we scattered them abroad in grants, homesteads, timber claims and in other ways, and the mere passer-by might gather them up, but now that they are seen to be diamonds and rubies, they pass day by day more and more into the hands of people who have the money to buy them and the financial power by which to hold them. Everywhere from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from Canada to the Gulf we find that on the richest and most valuable lands tenant farming is displacing the working farm owner.

Now this should be considered by those who have to do with the establishment of our govern-

mentally controlled land settlements. The prizes offered to the settlers should be opportunities to make homes "to them and their heirs forever," and on such homes to prosper through production and production only. The factor of profits through mere ownership of land is a factor of poison for the system.

The way out is perfectly easy, and will commend itself to a vast body of the best settlers. It lies through the policy of exempting the settler from taking upon himself the burden of paying for the farm, or assuming the fee simple title to it—or rather it gives him complete ownership of the farm considered as a producing unit, because the farm itself, the buildings, the results of tillage, the drainage, the fences, the benefits of soil improvement, everything of which the farm consists except the value which society has given it through the development of the community; these things will belong to the settler, to be disposed of as he sees fit, by sale or will. The value of the bare land, however, he may be excused from paying. The government should retain the fee simple title, and the settler should pay the government yearly a rental based on justice, with such forbearance in the first years as may be desirable and necessary

for the beginners. This rental should be readjusted from time to time, always on the basis of the value of the land alone, taking no account of the results of human labor in the improvement of the land.

Instead of being repellent to the settler, this system would be attractive. It would result in the selection of only so much land in the case of each settler as he might actually need, since he could never sell the unearned increment of value, but only what improvements he might put on the land. These he could alienate freely. He could build up the fertility of the land to the highest possible point, so as to grow from one acre what others might not be able to produce from three; he could make his buildings the best that the needs of the farm might call for; he could specialize in attractiveness; and no accumulation of value in improvements either for utility or beauty or comfort would add a penny to his rental, which would be based on the unearned increment only. His rent would be no more than that of his neighbor who might be slothful or wasteful. His burden would be a year-by-year burden only, and would be the lightest possible in view of the fact that the land would be bought for him by the government as a

part of a large tract, and it should be safe to assume, for its actual value. So the settler would be taking on the land value as an annual charge at the lowest point now possible. He could be left as free as the government might believe just, and in a few years he would, as a matter of course, be perfectly free to sell, to lease, or otherwise to dispose of what he possesses in the land—which would be the perpetual right, to him and his heirs forever, to use that land and all the improvements and betterments upon it as a farm. It would be his farm; but the land values would still be owned by the government, and to the government he would pay a just rental yearly to be periodically readjusted, for the privilege of exclusive and perpetual user.

This system of American yeomanry would therefore be attractive to the settler. It would be equally beneficial to the government. The rental would be at first based on the purchase price, and would exact from the settler so much as and no more than would be necessary to pay the interest on the purchase price and the costs of administration. To take more would be to squeeze a profit out of the settler; to take less would be to make him a pauper—two things to be avoided. As the

communities grew, however, the unearned increment of value would begin to accumulate. The church, the schoolhouse, the community center, the macadamized road, the cooperative society, the line of motor-trucks, the telephone and mail service, the profits localized through the agricultural advisers, the profits localized through the reputation of the community for live stock, fruit, or other products—all these things would add to the community value, the unearned increment of value in the lands, and would be taken by the government in periodically adjusted rentals. This would be the first instance in history of rents based on what the farmer ought to pay rather than on what he can be made to pay. These slowly rising rentals—for if the community is prosperous there is sure to be a rise rather than a fall, though a fall might occur and be reflected in the rentals under abnormal conditions—would give the government an increasing income from its investment. In other words, the government would be placed in a position to make a profit. This, of course, it should not do. It would be perfectly just, however, for the government to use these advancing rentals in part at least as an amortization fund to repay itself for its original investment; but the settlements would

morally possess the right to demand that in the end these funds accumulated from the unearned increment of value in the lands on which their homes were situated, should be devoted to the common good of the community which produced them. One needs no gift of prophecy to enable him to see in these communities the richest, the most prosperous, the most contented and happy, and the best equipped in everything which makes the common life worth living in all America. A society based on the use of the common funds for the common good, the use of land paid for on the basis purely of what it is worth, and an agriculture founded on production only—the opportunity is open for the building up of these things in the reconstruction of the country after the war,

## XII

### PRIVATE COLONIZATION COMPANIES

**I**T may be assumed from what precedes, and from the strictures which have been laid on our prevailing methods of land settlement through private dealers in farm lands that it is proposed that all land settlement in future, and especially all those readjustments of industry through agricultural development which shall appear to be necessary during the period of reconstruction following the war, shall be made through governmental agencies. The writer wishes to correct that impression if it exists. The methods of dealers in farm lands may as a rule be bad, but for all that they will under any conceivable circumstances settle ten families on the land where the governments, state and national, will settle one. They have the land; and they possess the organizations, the system, and the skill requisite to make their operations successful in colonization, and in those sporadic sales which can not properly be called by a name which connotes larger and more systematic

dealings. The private companies will continue to do business; the only manner in which their doings can be affected is by inducing or compelling changes in their methods.

Not all of them are characterized by unscrupulousness; and not all of them are intolerant to suggestions as to improved methods. The writer might call attention to certain colonization companies which are doing so much for their settlers that the governmentally conducted operations will be entitled to congratulations if they do as well. They have learned that it pays to look after the permanent welfare of those located on their lands. They carefully group their people, definitely abandoning the old real estater's policy of scattering them so as to reduce the distance from any given tract to the next neighbor as a selling argument. This grouping sets up a community life at once—a social life which is carefully fostered by the colonizing company. The settlers are organized to make easier the tasks which require collective effort, and for certain marketing problems. Every settler is given assistance in the way of getting a start in live stock, and better bred animals are bought by the colonizing company and traded to the settlers for their scrubs. Certain



blocks are selected as community centers, and lots reserved on which schoolhouses, churches, community halls, stores, creameries, blacksmith shops, cheese factories and the like may be built. Motor-truck lines are promoted for economical communication, on roads which are established and the improvement of which is promoted by the colonizing companies. The state colleges and agricultural experts, and workers in educational and social matters are induced to take an interest in the communities, and to help them. The prevailing note is study of conditions, and this is in itself an education for the settlers and makes for successful and contented community life. The best methods for the improvement of the land are cooperatively studied.

The settlers are given financial support, and their burdens are lightened during the first hard years. Given a certain amount of improvement by the settler, and his payments on his land are postponed or at least adjusted to his ability. He is given a house, some fencing, the necessary out-buildings and necessities as a part of the transaction by which he buys the land; and is put in possession of the best methods of reclamation and improvement which the company has accumulated

in its study of the situation. Banks are organized, the function of which it is to extend credit to the settlers. The company takes a long look ahead when it begins operations, and acts on the expectation that it will have business relations with these people for many years, and that it will be the best thing for all parties if they prosper.

These colonizers say that they do this because it pays—and no doubt it does, as wise liberality in business usually pays. That these methods pay is shown by the fact that one of these companies has pretty nearly outgrown the necessity for advertising, having turned that part of their business over to “their loving friends”; the last word I had from the manager was to the effect that he had applications in hand for more farm sites than he possessed, and that he would be obliged to get more land to accommodate the people who had heard of his settlements. It does pay, no doubt, and that is the finest thing about it; for colonizers should not be found reluctant to do the thing that pays; but some of their policies indicate that there is in the management some beneficent taint of patriotism. Why else do they carefully restrict the number of settlers belonging to a neighborhood of foreigners, so that while the community

may be large enough to give neighborship with their kind, it is not so large as to stand in the way of the speedy Americanization of the settlers and especially of their children?

These instances are cited to show that while the tendency of the colonization company is to skin the settlers, there are profitable methods which are praiseworthy. The greatest temptation is to put unduly high prices on the land—and I do not say that any colonization company has been free from a yielding to it; but some companies give something for the settlers' money besides a bare tract of land on which he may sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, all unaided.

Private colonization will go on; must it go on altogether in the old way? Can the government do anything to spread the benign contagion of these good examples? The best colonization companies think that the government can do something and should.

Reasons of public policy certainly exist. We have laws against the utterance of forged notes or counterfeit money; but the selling of a counterfeit farm is far worse than the passing of a counterfeit bill. The recipient of the counterfeit bill

has given value for it; but the buyer of a counterfeit farm not only gives value for it, but he then wrecks his life finding out that he has been defrauded—his life and that of his wife and children. The writer has had to do with the loaning of something like a hundred and fifty millions of dollars on farm lands within the past two years; and the saddest things which have come before him are those unavailing applications for credit of settlers on farms who still owe on them, after paying out all they had, as much as they are worth. They struggle to be brave, shutting their eyes to their losses, fiercely contending that the values they have paid or have agreed to pay are sound, and fight on like Sisyphus eternally rolling to the hilltop the boulder which eternally rolls back to crush them. We have passed laws to protect the public against wildcat banking; but wildcat real estate is more insidious, since fewer people know how to detect the spurious farm than are able to see the lack of soundness in a bank. The moral health of business generally, the vital necessity of protection for the returning soldier and the industrially unsettled as a class, in this great national exigency, demands that something be done.

It is suggested by some of the best of the colonization companies that the federal government should establish a licensing system for such concerns, leaving to the companies themselves the choice as to enrolling in the governmentally controlled class. Such a system would enable the government to say to the colonization concerns, "Do thus and so, and we will give you the governmental O. K." The possession of this approval would be of immense value to the companies to which it might be granted. It should be given on condition that the colonizing company put in effect something like the system I have described, together with such improvements as may be practicable. It would give the colonization company that public recognition for its fitness for its trust which is possessed by certified and chartered accountants, physicians, lawyers, pharmacists, and others who are licensed to do business. The objection to it on the part of some dealers lies in the fact that those not possessing it would soon come to be known as colonization quacks; but the fact is that many of them are just that and nothing more. I believe that there is in this a suggestion for a very vital and necessary reform. The possession of such a license would be of immense

advantage to the colonization company possessing it; and among these advantages might be that of enabling it to sell its lands for a higher price; and the matter of price is one of the things which the licensing power should take cognizance of before granting the license.

In many of the states there are constitutional inhibitions against the state engaging in works of internal improvement, or carrying on any business except that of government interpreted according to the narrowest definition of the word. Such states can not without changes in their constitutions provide lands for the land-settlement projects which Congress may authorize as mentioned heretofore, or for any projects of their own. They can, however, take part in the sort of land settlement just now suggested. They can cooperate with the general government in putting into effect a licensed, regulated, inspected and controlled system of colonization carried on by those who alone have the authority under these timid and outgrown constitutions to own land and dispose of it for agricultural purposes. One can see nothing but good in such arrangements. The work of colonization could not be made worse by such a system than it is now.

### XIII

#### THE SETTLERS' SUPPLY OF MONEY

**T**HE average farm in the United States employs far too little capital; and surveys of the farm business show that up to a certain point those farms pay best which employ the most capital. There is a point of course where the investment of capital reaches the line of diminishing returns; but the ordinary farmer seldom attains it.

The mere offer of capital to any community of farmers in the form of easy, low-interest-bearing, long-time credits will not be accepted by any large proportion of them; and in refusing to take the capital, they are right. They know that they have not learned to use capital on the farm wisely, and until that art is acquired the farmer is wise to go on according to the methods he understands. Where the matter is studied, however, under guidance and supervision, as it must be under any successful colonization scheme, whether private or governmental, the art of using capital will be acquired rapidly by the settlers, and ways of using

it will be constantly pointed out to them. Their success will depend on the credit facilities offered them.

Rural credits are of two sorts, land-mortgage credits, and personal credits. There is in this country no system of personal farm credits save such as are offered by the banks. The banks serve the farmers in many localities as well as they can; but the farmers need personal credit on their notes for periods longer than are consistent with sound banking; and in some parts of the country the farmers contribute no insignificant a portion of the mass of business which must be cared for by the banks; but their wants are not catered to, nor adequately met. Where agriculture is the chief business of any country, and where the farmers are generally well-to-do, as for instance, in Iowa, Illinois, southern Wisconsin, and similar localities, the farmers occupy an advantageous position with regard to credit, and in some places practically dominate the local banks, sitting as members of their boards of directors, and demanding with success that the bank furnish the credit needed, which they do, by renewals and other deviations from standard banking methods.



As a matter of fact, though, farmers fail of recognition in proportion to their need of credit, though not in proportion to their financial responsibility, just in proportion as they lack the ability to impress themselves upon the financial forces in their communities. They do not in many regions, get the personal credit they deserve, and there are classes of them everywhere who suffer in this manner. In many parts of the country a financial system has been built up based on the exploitation of farmers through high interest rates; though it must be admitted that where banks are established even on this basis, they bring some relief in places where prior to their establishment the farmers' only credit was granted by factors and commission merchants. Even the weakest bank—and many banks are not able to exist on the legal interest rate because of their own lack of resources—even the bank which is not above the practises of the loan shark, is likely to be a better source of credit than those who exploit the farmer through advances of goods at ruinous prices and at high interest rates. Where the bankers are serving regions full of flourishing cities, and are catering to merchants and manufacturers, especially if agriculture is languishing, the bankers

are prepossessed with the value of another sort of clientele, and the farmers suffer for credit in regions of redundant loanable capital.

No land settlements made in pursuance of a policy of reconstruction can succeed in the absence of proper credit facilities, both personal and on land mortgage; and any proper system will look to this matter as a part of the general scheme. There is a very important land-mortgage business in the United States in private hands, and the only important governmental rural credit organization in the United States—the Federal Farm Loan System—is a land-mortgage system. The United States government has waited long to give the states time to enter the field of personal credit, which because of varying local conditions seems properly to belong to them, but in vain; and it may be predicted that the general government will finally make up its mind to take this business up in connection with any plan of land settlement which may be adopted as a measure of reconstruction.

The Federal Farm Loan System can be made of the greatest utility in connection with the settling of the industrially unsettled on the land. At the outset few or none of the settlers will be able

## 108 WHAT FEDERAL FARM LOAN SYSTEM CAN DO

to borrow on their lands through it, because it loans no more than fifty per cent. of the value of the land plus twenty per cent. of the permanent insured improvements; and any man who can get along with that amount of credit can find plenty of opportunities to buy, the seller carrying the amount unpaid. But where states are operating land settlements, it is possible through the Federal Farm Loan System for loans to be made on behalf of the settlers equal to half the value of the farms, thus releasing the state's funds to that extent. Under private colonization schemes ethically conducted, under favorable conditions, the value added to the land by the settler will often in a few years bring the amount owed down to a point where it can be funded in a Federal Farm Loan, as has been done within the past two years in many cases.

The advantage of the Federal Farm Loan lies in its low interest rate—now five and a half per cent.—and its long-time amortization features. The borrower pays the interest and one per cent. on the face of the loan each year in the way of an amortization payment—at the present rate he pays six and a half per cent. each year—and thereby amortizes or pays off his debt in less than

thirty-five years. During this time, if he pays that sixty-five dollars on a thousand dollar loan, he is free from danger as to foreclosure or the necessity of renewal. He can pay the debt off in whole or in part at any interest date; but no one has the right to make him pay it except at this very moderate rate.

There are some very important possibilities in this fact. The second mortgage is not looked upon with favor by most capitalists; but numerous landowners have felt it safe to sell lands to tenants, taking for the sum the tenant was unable to pay in any case, first the proceeds of a Federal Farm Loan in cash, and second, a second mortgage on the premises. These men reason that this sort of second mortgage is a different thing from the ordinary second mortgage. It can not be cut out by the foreclosure of the first mortgage if the interest and amortization payments on the first mortgage are paid, or so long as they are paid. The first mortgage is not a heavy load, and is so adjusted that the farmer can easily carry it; and it is a prior lien which decreases all the time. Given conditions under which the farmer can prosper, and such a second mortgage is an excellent security. There seems to be no other current

## 110 FARMER BENEFITS BY TAX-EXEMPT BONDS

form of mortgage which is as favorable to the holder of the second mortgage as the Federal Farm Loan mortgage.

The Federal Farm Loan System should be used freely, as it can be, in aiding land settlements for reconstruction; both by private colonizers and on governmentally operated projects. It sold its bonds at four and a half, then at five, and has now returned to the lower rate. The money it raised on four and a half per cent. bonds it loaned to the farmers at five, and its five per cent. money at five and a half. Its present rate to the farmer is five and a half. If days of cheaper money come, it will lower its interest rate. It gets its funds by selling bonds free of all taxation and the farmer gets the benefit of this exemption. This is the only manner by which the farmer can be freed from the burden of paying taxes on his debts, since taxation of the bonds would mean a higher interest rate on the bonds and therefore a higher rate on the farmer's mortgage. The Federal Farm Loan System operates all over the United States, thus serving localities hitherto outside the region of cheap supply of money. It can take up the mortgages of settlers as soon as they are equal to no more than fifty per cent. of the

value of the land plus twenty per cent. of the permanent insured improvements. It can make the second mortgage of the seller of land a desirable security where the fundamental transaction is sound. It is governmentally operated, and may therefore be called upon by the governments, both state and national, to serve such projects within the margin of safety as a part of its plain duty.

## XIV

### SOME DEMOBILIZATION PROBLEMS

**G**OOD times after the war will enable the industries of the country to absorb the unsettled and gradually reduce all maladjustments—if we have good times. Taxes will be higher than we have ever seen them—let us hope that they will be so planned as to bear as lightly as possible on production and consumption—which are two words that mean in many of their connotations very much the same thing. The rebuilding of the devastated regions of the world, the replacing of the lost and worn-out machinery, the building and manning of the ships which must replace those which have been lost, the maintenance of starving populations and the gain which must be made in the food reserves of the world; all these should demand increased production for years. The greatest question relating to this business lies in the ability of the nations demanding aid to pay for the goods furnished. Plunged into an abyss of debt, prostrate as to the

very means of making their livings, the nations will require the services of the greatest financiers of all the ages if they make themselves able to buy what they need and pay for it. Take the Russian trade, for instance: everything is needed in Russia; but who is to stand good for the bills for it? Take Belgium and France and Serbia and Poland: how are these peoples to arrange the financing of the debts they must create if their wants are to be supplied? Take Germany: the welfare of the world may demand, aside from all humane considerations, that Germany be helped out of the Slough of Despond of debts and decay in which the mad passions of her people and her government have bogged her down; but how will she get the wherewithal to pay these bills in addition to those which the injured peoples will demand of her on the simple principle of justice?

Doubtless the prostrate nations will very soon begin to pay for some of the things which they must have in the only way known to trade, by giving goods for goods; but the very ability to produce, the power to employ labor, depends in large measure upon obtaining food, tools and credit. It looks as though for some of them the most terrible period of their history, of the history



of any people, is just beginning; and unless they can pay for what we stand ready to produce, they can not set in motion that machinery of trade and production which must be moving if we have good times.

We stand in better case than most peoples, however; but he who thinks that we have no problem of reconstruction and that without any more of plan or system than that which followed the Civil War we shall slip from triumphs of war to triumphs of peace is carrying optimism beyond the limits of safety. Every one is familiar with the fact that we face the return to the business of getting a living of four millions of men who have become soldiers; and that something like eight to twelve million more hands which have been engaged in production for war must be shifted over to peace industries. Assuming that there is work enough for all the very shift is a tremendous problem; and to me it does not seem that the normal industries of peace can possibly absorb them. The ability of the peoples of the world to buy the products we might turn out if they were all employed is more than doubtful, even though we returned to the old conditions of employment; but those old conditions will not return. The women

and all those who before the war were in various modes employed in unproductive ways or wholly or partially unemployed, but who have been regularly enlisted among the laborers of the country will not willingly give up their jobs. The high cost of living which must prevail for a long time will force a more general employment of our man-and-woman power than has been the rule. The returning soldiers will find their jobs gone in many hundreds of thousands of cases, and they will not be able to get them back; while those who do recover their positions will displace others who have not only the right to employment, since they too have been fighting their country's battles, but who will possess the power through unemployment to disturb profoundly the labor situation and, through this, the very structure of society. It will not be wise to assume that America is entirely free from those dangers which have come upon Russia, Germany and Austria, and which loom portentously on the horizons of some of the victorious nations. The only thing which can save us from dangers of this sort is good times; and there is no such thing as good times in the absence of the general employment of labor. Good luck will not carry us through unscathed. Bad states-

manship has brought the world into this plight; and nothing but the wisest statesmanship can get us out. As for some of the nations, they seem beyond hope save by going down into the depths and slowly emerging after a period of national agony the contemplation of which is terrible.

The situation is as full of new problems as was that faced by the nation when we entered the war. What we were obliged to find in ourselves when we made war in France was boldness, originality, and that sustained daring which is courage. The nation now needs originality and courage in peace, just as it needed it to build up its great war machine. If the war had gone on we should have overwhelmed the Germans in 1919. The Germans introduced poison gas; and in 1919 we would have shown such mastery of gas that we could have gassed our way to Berlin. The Germans made terrible use of aircraft; and we should have blinded them and killed them by hundreds of thousands in 1919, and every German city would have existed only by our sufferance. We should have crushed them into the earth with tanks. We should have talked to our airmen in flight as we converse with our neighbors over the telephone lines. We should have carried our artillery along

with the infantry. We should have made war with German terribleness, carried by our boldness and originality to the *nth* power. We should have fed and cared for our men better than an army was ever cared for. Our soldiers would have been kept contented, happy, and intrepid by original methods of keeping up their spirits—through a new organization devoted to their morale.

Shall we find among American statesmen in facing the problems of peace this originality, this boldness, this courage? There is nothing either in the recent or the remote past of the American Congress to justify the hope that we shall. We find our statesmen quibbling over the obsolete questions of the past, blindly following paths which should have been deserted even before the war, questioning the locks of the future with the keys of 1914. Our record in the war, so far as was good—and most of it was excellent—was made by taking the advice of specialists. Who sees any tendency on the part of our statesmen to find out what the specialists have to say on the matters which must be settled and settled right if we escape from the dangers which confront us? Most of the men now enrolled in the service of the government and whose services would be priceless

to the nation if they were retained and given authority, will go back into civil life after the war—are now going back to it; and so far as can be seen Congress does not see that it is incapable of solving these questions without their aid. We seem to be fated to pursue a course to be settled through old-fashioned debate in the halls of Congress in which the contestants in the joint debate will have no vision more penetrating than the same men had before the war was fought. Industrial concerns employing thousands of men are discharging their forces on account of the cancelling of war orders; and returning soldiers are being discharged at our ports by thousands without any one in Congress being aware that a situation surcharged with danger and suffering and injustice and discontent is thereby created. Nobody seems to see that the only way out is to insure good times through the prevention of unemployment; and in the meantime unemployment with all the evils that come in its train, with the prospect of greater dangers than it ever brought before, is beginning to make its appearance—while we debate about such things as the tariff and whether or not the railways and wire lines shall be returned to private ownership, and when!

## XV

### WORK FOR THE WORKLESS

**WE** as a nation are not unfamiliar with unemployment. We have had dreadful periods of it; and we have never been able to deal with it except in the way of the quack who treats smallpox by excising the pustules as they break out. We have treated the pustules of unemployment by such things as free lodging-houses, soup-kitchens, the woodpile at the workhouse, and national hysteria at such things as Coxey's Army. We have never sought for any antitoxin for the smallpox of unemployment; but we have never had the disease in any form which could convict us of being a nation of malignant asses as will the unemployment of 1919, 1920, or any other year in which unemployment breaks out if it comes as a result of the war. For this unemployment will come as the result of a national policy which we have deliberately adopted, and which we knew all the time rendered unemployment a possibility, even a probability; so that it will come upon us

as a calamity which we saw coming, for which we have had plenty of time to plan remedies, and failed to do anything effective. Its coming will stamp the American policies now regarded as a huge success, as a colossal failure. And is this a time when any government can afford to prove itself a failure?

Unemployment in the past has usually been the result, or at least it has followed, financial disturbances. A period of hard times gradually brings a readjustment, forges ahead into prosperity, which fans itself into feverish speculation accompanied by under-consumption or over-production, whichever one cares to call it, and the speculative era finally resolves itself into panic, depression, shut-downs, liquidations, bankruptcies, and such restrictions of credit that everything in the way of business which can be stopped by restricted credits is slowed down and stopped. Our bad financial system has been supposed to have had, and no doubt has had much to do with these industrial paroxysms, and we trust that in our better monetary system of to-day we have found a cure. Whether or not this trust is a vain one is not the question here. The point now under discussion is this—each of these periods has illus-

trated the manner in which we have failed to deal with the problem of unemployment; for unemployment is an unfailing accompaniment of every era of financial depression.

Each of them exhibits the spectacle of a large class of workers out of employment, and suffering; but none of them has appeared at a time when there was not plenty of work which needed doing, and which every one knew ought to have been done. The trouble always was, broadly speaking, that nobody put men to work on anything except the task which would pay immediate returns; and no matter how brisk trade as a whole might at any time be, if the work were stopped which looks to the more or less distant future for its returns, hard times and unemployment would at once result. Wharves, docks, canals, the improvement of harbors and waterways, the clearing of forests for farms, the extensions of railways, the laying out and building of highways, the opening of mines, the draining of swamps, the construction of irrigation works, the building of reservoirs, the making of ships, the erection of industrial plants, the building of street railways, the creation of power plants—all these are things on which labor is employed with an eye to future



profits, or at least to the future welfare. In periods of industrial depression they are abandoned and work upon them largely shut down. Of course there is unemployment. If the same took place in the midst of the greatest business boom there would be unemployment, and hard times would result at once and as a matter of course.

As a corollary of these facts we have seen time and again this strange situation: during flush times, when labor was scarce and wages high, these permanent works have been seen in the field bidding for laborers and buying labor in the open market when it was highest. A railway, which during times of low wages and unemployment was forced by lack of credit and the necessity of paying dividends, to let its roadbed and rolling stock run down and deteriorate, as soon as times improved rushed into the market and competed for steel and other material, invaded the labor market and competed for laborers. The same thing is true of the manufacturer, the company engaged in works of permanent improvement of all sorts, of municipal corporations, of states, of the national government. Their nervelessness contributes to the national lassitude in time of chill,

and their abnormal efforts to make up for lost time stimulates toward madness the national fever. There is nowhere any regulative agency which waits when labor is well employed, and enters the market for labor when unemployment threatens. No doubt there are some exceptions to this rule, but they are few. There should be a means of turning this alternating current in labor into a continuous one; and now on the eve of the demobilizing of our armies and of making the great shift from war to peace is the time to search for this means and to put it into effect.

The statesmen of the states and the nation need not look far afield in order to find an abundance of work that aches to be done in order that the productiveness of the country and our national well-being be subserved in the future; all they need is courage and that originality in statesmanship which merely accepts and carries out policies which every thoughtful mind has long since received as proper and salutary. Originality in thought is not required. All that is needed—and that is indispensable—is originality in legislative and executive methods; and the courage to slough off the skin of conventional partisanship which most of the public men of other nations seem to

have shed in the times of trial and stress through which they have passed. A repentant but illiterate sinner in class-meeting once thanked God that "the shackles had fallen from his eyes and the scales from his feet." Such a resurrection from political death is what our public men seem to require. Their eyes see well enough; but they need unshackling; their legislative feet need unscaling of their legislative sloth.

Nothing has been proposed at this writing for the prevention of unemployment—and unemployment is already beginning—except the work incident to a land-settlement policy which in itself has not been given to the public in any form which permits of intelligent consideration. The improvement of the good undeveloped lands of the nation—swamp, arid and stump lands—through the paid labor of soldiers who have returned with well-settled purposes which contemplate the taking over of the reclaimed lands as farms, is an important part of such a policy. This matter has received much attention from the Department of the Interior, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Agriculture; and Secretary Lane appears to have taken hold of the laboring oar. Wherever such lands are of good agricultural

quality, can be reclaimed at a price less than equally good lands now under cultivation can be bought for, all things considered, are well situated as to markets, and the farming of which under proper supervision and guidance can be freed from the drawbacks of years of failure through the development of a new type of farming or the adaptation of old types to new conditions, these projects are good and may be made profitably to employ a good deal of labor which will ultimately prove productive.

But no scheme which looks merely to the employment of the returning soldier is adequate, even though it took care of every one of them. Those who have labored back of the lines, whether here or abroad and who become industrially unsettled in the great industrial shift from war to peace have nearly the same moral claim upon the country, and their lapse into idleness and poverty would present a sociological problem quite as acute as though they had been soldiers. We worked as a unit for victory, on the farm, in the shops, and in the counting room; no plan for the prevention of unemployment can be acceptable unless it considers the nation as a unit in peace.

And let it be considered that only a relatively

small proportion of the returning soldiers even, to say nothing of their comrades in peaceful pursuits, will desire to go upon the land and become farmers; and of those who think they wish to do so, only a portion ought to be encouraged to do so. Letters from the front may pour in asking for farms; but if these young men, and their fellows similarly minded at home, are given the advice and instruction which they ought to have, and especially if the women who will be asked to live on farms with them are adequately advised and instructed, the host of prospective farmers will shrink surprisingly. It ought to shrink. The city people have been so hypnotized by the fairy-tales of the pleasures and profits of farming, mostly by the waves of suggestion sent out by the rosy-hued word-painting of those who have land for sale, that if they were free to follow their impulses the open lands of the United States would be filled up—temporarily—by a hegira of city folk filled with visions of lowing kine, fleecy sheep, automatic hens, big red apples, luscious peaches, lush vegetables, new-mown hay, shady nooks, babbling brooks, dewy meads, trickling springs, golden oranges, brown nuts and all that; with swollen bank-accounts from intensive cultivation

carried on by scientific methods which the rubes and hicks have never thought of. Temporarily, I say; for their future would be calamitous to themselves and to the nation. They would do about as well in farming as the company of Captain John Smith of Virginia history did in pioneering. They would wake up soon, and wake up crying for sustenance as most babes in the woods are wont to do.

Farming is or is not profitable according to the experience, the endurance, the patience, and the farming intelligence of the farmer; but it is never as prosperous as the most flourishing city occupations. Any one who can stand the life, and who has a family who can endure it, can make a living at farming; but to a vast majority of city people life as it must be lived on the farm is a living death. They have been spoiled so that they can not enjoy the many privileges and compensations of farm life, and its penalties are unendurable, especially to the women. An unskilled farmer makes on the average lower wages, counting his receipts as wages, than the unskilled laborer in the cities; but the highly skilled farmer may earn in a given period of years more than the average skilled city man. A farmer if he is

of the right sort may turn himself from an unskilled to a skilled laborer without changing jobs—which is a great advantage; and the returns of the farmer have a tendency under fair conditions to accumulate, so that a skilful and fortunate farmer is able to look forward to the possession of a competence in his old age in a greater proportion of cases than prevails even with the skilled city laborer. Farming is a long game in which the cards are dealt only once a year.

That farming is not as profitable a business as we have often been assured is shown by the drift of population to the cities. People do not desert a profitable business for one relatively unprofitable. The writer remembers when the population of the United States was preponderantly agricultural—almost as much so as that of Russia to-day; now it is overwhelmingly urban. This fact tells the story of farming profits in a manner which can not be answered nor refuted. To use a military term, the morale (not the morals) of the agricultural population of the country is low. The farmers in the main are not proud of being farmers. It is only in the cities and among city people that we find enthusiasm about farming. Life in the country yields to the proper influences in this

matter of the interest and pride taken in it by the country people, and farming might be made the most attractive of all lives for millions more of our people, a matter yet to be considered in these pages; but except here and there in imperfect sorts of ways little success has attended the efforts hitherto expended on the amelioration of country conditions. In other words we have no country life so fitted for the reception of those millions of city people including the returned soldier and his unsettled fellow citizen, as to hold them either as to profits or conditions of life. Let us go slowly and carefully, therefore, in placing on the land any of them except those—and their numbers are not inconsiderable—who are already habituated to agricultural life either in America or abroad.

Such being the facts in relation to the prevention of unemployment through land settlement, it follows that we should not attach too much importance to land settlement or to the possibilities of agricultural life as a part of the programme. The returned soldier will return to civil life bringing with him those qualities which made him such a splendid soldier—independence and initiative. His fellow citizens unsettled by the great shift will possess the same qualities. These people are



not very biddable. They will do as they please in living their own lives. When they find that they have made a mistake in any disposition of their lives, they will quit. All we can do for them is to give them opportunities for employment; and the farm does not offer a field sufficiently broad. We must, therefore, turn to other works for their hands—and there is plenty for them to do if the proper measures are taken to set the works in motion.

It is stated on what seems to be good authority that Italy has already appropriated \$350,000,000 for railways, \$200,000,000 for public works, \$100,000,000 for public utilities, and \$20,000,000 for adjustment of unemployed labor, while France has appropriated \$680,000,000 for peace work. Of this French appropriation \$360,000,000 will go to railways, \$200,000,000 for ports and bridges, and \$100,000,000 for communes and provinces under their local administration. All this generosity in the appropriation of money—which must a good deal of it be borrowed from us—is to prevent calamitous consequences from the confusion following the war; while our Congress seems bent upon putting the railroads back into hands over

which it will have no control—a great national factor which in France and Italy has already had the huge sum of more than three quarters of a billion dollars appropriated to its improvement, extension and development.

## XVI

### THE RAILWAYS IN RECONSTRUCTION

**N**O labor done by human hands and human invention is more permanently productive than the building of railways. Water transportation is cheaper than any land carriage where it is available, and few great areas are better provided with good and improvable waterways than the United States; but the waterway runs only where nature has placed it or where canals may be made as inter-communicating routes between the natural bodies of water. The best part of the United States would still be uninhabited save by scattered settlements had it not been for the building of the railways, which run over hill and dale, tunnel mountains, climb gradients, span abysses, open up the fertile hinterlands, link coasts to coasts, and seek out the timber, coal and metals wherever they may be found. The railway has freed national development from the shackles of the natural obstacles to the running of water. Never, except as the camel conquered the desert,

was anything like this done in the history of mankind. The development of the United States is the product more than anything else, of the building of the railways. Where railways are needed for our further development, no better work can be found for our hands to do which are either idle or in danger of becoming idle, than that of building railways.

There has been a great slowing down in railway building in the past quarter of a century; and there are many who believe that this indicates that we have railways enough. Nothing could be more mistaken. We need thousands of miles of new railway lines, the construction of which would increase the ability of the nation to support its population through all the future.

For many years railway building has been controlled by the railway systems now in existence, and the financial powers interested in them. There was a time when almost any group of men desiring to build a railway which could show prospects for future earnings, could borrow the money with which to build it. Any ambitious town or city could make itself a railway center through its own enterprise; and history is full of those exciting races for the control of strategic points

between railways competing—actually competing—for the business of great new areas of developing country or for the traffic of regions of increasing production, new or old. The railway companies had the power to bring this competition to an end and they did so. The struggle between two great groups of financiers, one seeking to establish a new line from the Pittsburgh basin to tidewater at Baltimore, and the other to prevent it, in which battle the building company was worsted, is the last instance on any important scale which occurs to the writer in the United States.

Railway building as a large influence in the development of this country has ceased. The railways give one reason for this, the critics of the system give another. The facts support both sides. The railways were powerful enough to frighten off any financier whose enterprise might give them an impulse to support the new line; and the sad story of bankruptcy of line after line of independent railway ending with receivers' sales to the old lines showed the reality of the danger. Old agreements and understandings between the old systems for the division of territory often blocked the building of lines confessedly

needed to the end that the balance between these old systems be not disturbed. Most of the railways were built wastefully and were over-capitalized—the common system being to sell bonds for the entire cost of building the road and of making a large number of people rich through various side profits, and then issuing stock, usually divided between the promoters and the financiers, for as much more. This saddled the railways with a burden of stocks and bonds of more than twice what ought to have been allowed—a burden which resulted in bankruptcies and receiverships in those cases in which the development failed to pay interest on the bonds, in heavy burdens to the people served by the roads. As soon as the plums had been plucked from this tree and the pickers had become powerful enough to prevent this sort of wasteful business, it was stopped. The time came when the financiers back of the management of the roads looked after that. For a long time no railways have been built except on agreement, or where there were still plums to be picked for the good of all parties to the system. Railroad building as an industry came to an end years ago.

One of the principal causes contributing to the

power of the existing railway systems to do this was the monopoly of terminals in the great cities, the smaller cities, and at water-fronts. The new railway simply could not get into such cities as New York, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, St. Paul, Minneapolis and many other cities and towns. They were either forced to make ruinous terms with their competitors, when they could make any terms at all, or they had to labor under the equally ruinous handicap of terminals remote from the business centers of the cities—and the situation grew worse with every year's development in the cities. Water-fronts, owned mainly by the existing railway companies or controlled by their subsidiary corporations, could not be used by the new railway company. This placed the new railway as well as the commerce of the cities at the mercy of the railways. It prevented the development of waterway commerce or threw it into the hands of the railways. It exercised a power over our commerce, and even our national development, which few people appraise at its real importance—and it killed independent railway building. The power of terminal monopoly was one of the chief reasons for

the adoption of government ownership of railways in Germany, where it was seen that no development of Germany's foreign commerce adequate to the plans of the empire could take place in the absence of a unified control of the railways and their terminals; and that any desirable development of waterway trade must await the same reform.

Ten years ago the monopoly of water-fronts by railways was almost universal in the United States. New York had her municipal wharves, but the approaches to them were controlled, and the immense harbor with the Hudson leading to it only partially solved her problem. A good deal of progress has been made since that time in publicly owned terminals, but private monopoly is still the rule. New Orleans is the best example in America of a great system of docks owned by the city, with freedom of access to them assured by a belt line of railway also controlled by the public; but for the most important terminals the case is hopeless save through a unified control of railways. Even in the absence of monopoly of terminals, the unity of interests of the present system of railways and their financial control renders any revival of railway construction impos-



sible. Some new arrangement must be made if there is to be activity in railway building.

And yet, many cities languish for the need of new railway connections. Many mining areas, especially in view of the community of interests between the mine ownership and the railway ownership, await the building of new railways for their development. Many areas which might be available for land settlement, both east and west, can be prosperous only through a resumption of railway building. Much traffic is sent over uneconomic routes. And the distance behind the known needs of the country to which railway development had lagged ten years ago or more, when the late Mr. James J. Hill stated that it would take the expenditure of five billion five hundred million dollars to enlarge the carrying capacity of the railways of the United States to render them able to do the business of the country in good times, has been increased rather than diminished since that time. We can not have good times in this country without vastly increased railway facilities. Good times have been strangled repeatedly by the inability of the railways to do the business of the nation when that business is running under a full head of steam. Inadequate

railway facilities act as an automatic reducing valve for our prosperity, and they will do so to a greater and greater extent in the future unless we build railways and build largely. It was the breakdown of the railways at the outbreak of the war with Germany which forced the United States government to take over the railways.

There was a time when railway construction was the great reservoir of common labor in the United States. Our returning soldiers and the industrially unsettled should be given employment in railway building to prevent unemployment in the great economic shift which faces us. The building of a railway is a permanent good, if the railway be needed. It does not pay at once, but its permanent effects are to increase the power of the nation to produce food, shelter and clothing, and to get our share of foreign trade. This sort of construction is therefore the very kind of effort which should be made when unemployment threatens. Plans should have been made before this to inaugurate this work, and not a day should be lost in belatedly making a beginning.

This national duty awaits the settlement of the status of the railways of the country. The taking over of the railways by the government offers an

opportunity for a change of policy which will make for railroad building which is as great as it has been unexpected. The restoration of the old régime would seem to blast every hope of better things. We have temporarily had unity of control of tracks, terminals, wharves, docks and other railway facilities, confessedly to the great increase in the efficiency of the system. Unified control can not be abandoned; it is an advantage which is too great. Prosperity must no longer be throttled because it generates more business than the railways can do. Good times are too precious to be sacrificed to the interests which demand the old system. We must have a new era of railway building; and that era should begin now in the interests of those who unless we undertake works of permanent improvement on a large scale will be pointed to within a year as victims of their own patriotism. We face the necessity of doing such things or suffering national disgrace, social upheavals, and hard times.

How the unified control of railways is to be accomplished can not be discussed here. It is rather surprising, however, that the experience of the city of Cleveland in controlling its street railways has not been studied as offering the outline

of a plan which would give all the benefits of public ownership, with few or none of its disadvantages. A corporation, not for profit, owns and manages the street railways of Cleveland as trustees for the public. There is unity of control, private management, and a system of rates based on earnings as shown by accounts kept in the interests of both the public and the property. The railway problem of the United States is enormously complex as compared with the street railway problem of Cleveland, but a correct principle is a great solvent of difficulties. Some new system ought to be devised—another reason why we look longingly to the American Congress for daring, courage and originality adequate to this unparalleled occasion. France and Italy point out the way to us, the one by having appropriated \$360,000,000 and the other \$350,000,000 for the railways with which we shall have to compete. Other nations, especially Germany, will not fall behind in their shift from war to peace.

## XVII

### CORRELATED WATERWAY DEVELOPMENT

**A** LONG with the very extension of our railway system must go, if we meet our needs adequately, a parallel and correlated development of waterways, with their wharves, docks, boats, and freight-handling machinery. These are all portions of our system of transportation. One reason for the failure of the railways to develop, to keep pace with the demands upon them, lies in the fact that they have always sought, and except as they are prevented by the broader policies which came in with government control still seek, to destroy water-borne commerce. To the private owners of railways every ton of freight carried on rivers, canals or lakes was so much lost to the railways. Running to every city and town as they do, and holding the whip-hand over shippers doing business to inland points, the railways have had, and under any system of control which fails to look upon transportation as a great national task which must be done by all available means and

always by the most economical means, for the good of the whole people, they always will have, the power to kill off waterway commerce save under exceptional conditions; and it is a power which they have always exercised ruthlessly, and always will so long as they possess it.

And yet, where waterway commerce can be fostered and built up it is vastly less expensive than railway transportation for all that slow, heavy, bulky freight which breaks the railways' backs when business becomes good. Even as to speed, the railways have not been able these many years to carry freight as fast as boats have been able to carry it over similar distances. I do not know just what the conditions are now; but the last time I looked into the matter, freight, such as oranges, which are supposed to move rapidly, made better time by boat from Pacific Coast points to the Atlantic seaboard than over the much shorter, and supposedly faster route by rail across the continent. All freight which can just as well move by water should do so to take the load off the railways, not only between the Pacific and Atlantic and Gulf points, but between points on the Lakes and seaboard cities via the Lakes and the Erie Barge Canal. The same is true as to

coastwise points on all our coasts and on our navigable streams. A release of railway equipment might thus be made possible which would in part solve our problem of insufficient railway facilities. If we expect to compete in the markets of the world we must remember that every reduction of freight rates to and from the seaboard, and every hour of time saved is an advantage to which our competitors will not be oblivious in their transportation arrangements.

The building up of our waterway trade according to that true balance between rail and water transport to which I refer, and with which every transportation expert is familiar, will require that much be done to improve our canals, to build new canals, to deepen and improve our rivers, to establish harbors both on the seaboard and inland, to deepen our harbors, to construct wharves and docks, and to install the proper freight-handling machinery at points of articulation between railway and sea-borne traffic, railways and inland waterway traffic, and between inland waterways and the ships that sail the seas.

Boats of the proper type must be built, and the problem of transfer of freight must be studied and efficient equipment put in use or this dual trans-

portation system will not be successful. Perhaps the most efficient articulation between rail and water traffic in the world exists in the ore and coal trade between points on Lake Superior and Lake Erie and Lake Michigan ports, and in the Great Lakes grain trade. This efficiency is attained through the wonderful adaptation of types of boat to equally wonderful freight-handling devices. Not many sorts of freight so adapt themselves to cheap handling devices as grain, ore and coal; but the cost of handling other sorts of commodities has been enormously cut down in well designed terminals both in America and abroad. Practically nothing has been done at most American ports along this line, so far as the taking care of water-to-rail or rail-to-water freight is concerned. This may be well illustrated by the cost of sending a package of goods say from Cincinnati to Louisville by an old-fashioned Ohio River steamboat. It is perfectly demonstrable that the mere task of carrying such a package down the sloping levee to the steamer, and stowing it away under the overhanging deck, and reversing the process at the point of destination costs more than the entire transport of the package by rail from one city to the other. This comparison is not to



the disadvantage of water transport as it should be, but only shows that we have no water-transportation facilities worthy of the name save in exceptional instances even where it is supposed to be an important factor in commerce.

The task of articulating railway with waterway, railway with the sea, and waterway with the sea is one which ought to be undertaken at once as a part of a unified transportation system, in which all agencies will be correlated, and every kind of carrying system be made to supplement and assist every other. It is one of those national tasks which make the country a better and more prosperous place in which to live and work, but its dividends come slowly. It can not be made immediately productive—but nothing will pay better in the long run. It is a great work and might profitably be made to employ great numbers of workers for years. The present status of the railways is the nation's opportunity to systematize our transportation, and once lost may be lost forever. The labor involved is exactly the sort of labor that ought to be done at a time such as this when unemployment threatens. But whether times are good or bad, we should take up the work of giving the nation an adequate transporta-

tion system—which it has not had for a quarter of a century. Without this, no good times will last. They will be strangled by bad transportation facilities. American business men have struggled along long enough trying to develop their business on the basis of being given cars for their goods as a favor only to be accorded them through business fasting and prayer. Italy is awake to the necessity of this sort of work in passing from war to peace, and has appropriated \$200,000,000 for “public works,” while France has set aside the same amount for “ports, bridges and road construction.”

## XVIII

### THE HIGHWAYS SHOULD BE IMPROVED

**T**HE real civilization of any nation can be gauged by no single test more accurately than by the state of its public highways, and the access to good roads without money and without price by its population. The real achievements of any state or neighborhood in the United States in intellectual progress may be judged by the extent to which it strives to give itself good roads, and the degree to which it succeeds, wealth, density of population, age of the community and natural obstacles considered. Wherever the roads are poor as compared with the ability of the population to give itself roads, that community is a backward community; it either refuses to tax itself for a prime necessity of civilization, or it allows great interests to escape taxation through the ignorance of the people or the corruption or inefficiency of its government. Wherever there are roads which are disgraced by that relic of barbarism, the toll-bridge or the toll-gate on the highway, there is

something radically wrong with that county, town, or state. It may seem civilized, but it fails to respond to one of the surest tests of civilization.

It fails in democracy; but it also fails in common sense. Nothing pays so well as the good free public highway. Especially since the internal-combustion engine has been so perfected as to make the motor-truck and the motor-car a rival of the railway in both speed and economy of transport, both for passengers and freight, the good hard-surfaced highway has become an essential element in the development of any civilized nation.

Reference has been made to the cost of loading and unloading freight as affecting the economies of rail and water traffic. The great advantage of the motor-truck is that it loads or unloads at the home, store, factory, or farm, and runs to the very door or unloading platform of the consignee without "breaking bulk." This is an economic factor to which only the alert business man is fully awake. Under ordinary conditions it costs as much to load a package of freight on a freight car and unload it at its destination, as it does to transport it once loaded on the railway track by steam-engine for a distance of something like two hundred and fifty miles; and the expense of load-

ing and unloading the freight of ships is as great as the actual carrying charges for a voyage of, say, twenty-five hundred miles. The motor-truck enables business under an enormous variety of conditions to avoid these terminal charges entirely. Freight at the loading platforms of mercantile or manufacturing concerns in cities, once loaded on the motor-truck, as it must be loaded in any case, may more economically go twenty, forty, or sixty miles—the distance varying with conditions—and be delivered, than to go by steam. The radius of action is determined by the higher cost of motor-truck transport as compared with steam, set off against the expense of unloading from truck to railway platform, loading on the railway car, unloading from the car at destination, and reloading on the delivery vehicle. Motor-truck transport is making very rapid progress on the basis of its economy in cost. Its economy in time is quite as considerable. Motor-car transport of passengers is equally important. These things are an integral portion of the progress of the future—the rise of the nation in the scale of civilization. Their development awaits the construction of hundreds of thousands of miles of good roads.

## CONDITIONS FAVORABLE FOR ROAD BUILDING 151

One of the most efficient services of the United States government is its Bureau of Roads in the Department of Agriculture. Laws exist which place this service at the command of state and local governments. There is no pioneering to be done in the way of an engineering organization. Nothing remains wanting but legislative courage and originality—and not much originality is required. The stage is set for the greatest era of road-building ever seen in any country.

Nothing pays better in an economic sense than good roads; but the benefits are widely disseminated in large part, and the returns are slow. Therefore road-building is an ideal sort of work to enter upon as a method of preventing unemployment. It suggests itself as a means by which slack times and unemployment may be avoided in this great shift of labor from the activities of war to the tasks of peace. There is enough of this sort of work to be done to keep employed for years every man thrown out of employment by this labor crisis. The work is one which appeals to almost every citizen. Its benefits are apparent. Its performance would not only employ labor, but would generate employment in other lines. It would create a demand for ma-

chinery and equipment in the doing of it almost comparable to that demanded by a war. It would stimulate traffic which in turn would call for great numbers of motor vehicles. It would stimulate the metal trades, and all related lines. It would bring into settlement back areas, and scatter the area of denser settlement, and thus call for equipment for the settler, whether he were a suburbanite going farther from the city and building a house, or a farmer locating in a region heretofore cut off from access from the world.

The motor highway may profitably take the place in many cases of the railway, and acts, and with the extension of good roads will act in more important ways as a feeder for the railway and the waterway. Such highways may be built and successfully operated over very difficult routes, and their cost will be justified economically in cases which would not justify a railway. For, be it remembered, the improved highway is a universal opportunity for communication. It serves the traveler on foot, it is a way for the cyclist, it carries the motorcycle, it is a highway for the farm wagon and the country buggy, it offers itself to the jitney, the flivver, the roadster, the limousine, the touring car, the light delivery truck, and

the heavy gasoline freighter. It is not built for dividends, but for use; and it serves every use from pedestrianism and neighborhood teaming, to inter-city freight deliveries. It enables the farmer to send his produce to markets from distances which were formerly quite prohibitive. It speeds things up. It civilizes. It adds value to every acre of land within its radius of influence. It is good for the country, the city, the church, the school. It may do almost all the railway can do, and a thousand things that the railway can not do. It costs less than the railway to build, and while it can not carry freight or passengers at as low a ton-mile or passenger-mile cost as can the railway as a mere matter of transport, in many instances, it can serve its territory, when its multifarious uses are considered, if its overhead be taken into account, at a less cost than a railway could do serving the communities for which the improved highway is adapted. There are regions which can be brought into the real world in no other way.

The motor highway multiplies the area from which cities may collect their milk, their vegetables, their fresh foods. It does this by decreasing spoilage, in the saving of time and by eliminating the jars and shocks which crush and break, as well



as by making it possible for the trade to be developed of collecting and assembling articles of food which in the absence of the good highway go to waste. It increases the areas available for any land-settlement policy which may be adopted; and more than any material factor, it does away with that isolation which makes it so hard for the country to strive against the city in attracting and holding its population. We are becoming over-urbanized as a nation. Too great a proportion of our people are dwellers in the cities. No material influence can do so much to make the country like the city, to give country people access to the city, to render country-minded city people contented in the country, to restore its lost balance of attractiveness to the country, as the improved highway.

The time is most opportune now to enter upon an era of active road building. The trucks which have been built in such almost countless numbers for the army are available for use on them; and statements have been made upon the authority of army officers which lead us to hope confidently that the new "Liberty Fuel" will free us from the burden of the constantly increasing cost of gasoline. The gospel of good roads has reached every citizen who reads or thinks. The task of road

building has become familiar to hundreds of thousands of men who have been in the army. Engineering ability is redundant. We should not wait for the appearance of hard times or unemployment before setting ourselves to this great task; for it should be entered upon no matter what the labor situation may be as a means of meeting a great national need. Should unemployment appear, it may be mitigated by offering to every idle man work on highway construction at good wages.

There can be no doubt that the good roads of France saved the nation in the present war. The troops which turned back the Germans at the first Battle of the Marne went forward in motor-trucks in almost countless numbers. The military value of good roads is enormous, and to no country in time of stress would it be so great as to the United States, whose coasts are open to attack on three sides.

I have said nothing heretofore as to the military plans for the future or as to the military value of waterways or railways. He must be, however, an incurable optimist who confidently feels that we have reached an era when national defense need not be looked to. We may all hope, and hope with much reason, for an end of wars; but potential

military power is a good deal like the frontiersman's gun. On any particular occasion he may not need it, but when he does need it he needs it badly.

In considering the building of avenues of transportation, and especially good hard-surfaced roads, it should not be forgotten that the possession of them by the United States multiplies our military strength for purposes of repelling invasion, and to many minds this must, for a considerable time at least, be a powerful argument in their favor.

For the practise of the arts of peace, therefore, as well as for use in war, and above all for the giving of employment to our unsettled labor in such a way as to ward off hard times, the credit of the United States, the states and our municipalities ought to be used in the building of these agencies, especially good roads, during a period when the credit of private concerns is likely at any time to be seriously crippled. A part of France's appropriation of \$200,000,000 for after-the-war peace work is for road building and roads are included in the objects for which Italy will spend an equal sum. These are beginnings only in the foreign countries. In the United States we are still keeping on the payrolls of munitions works and other

concerns engaged in strictly war manufacturing thousands of men doing the unnecessary thing in order that the men may have jobs. No doubt demobilization is delayed for similar reasons. In other words, we are operating munitions works woodpiles and running training camps as national soup-kitchens while there is useful work which should be done, and the failure to do which is a neglect of a plain national duty. The fact that this condition is upon us in the face of the fact that every intelligent citizen outside the halls of Congress has seen it coming ever since the first call to arms is the really ominous thing. There does not seem to be any considerable body of men in our national legislature capable of legislating for the country in this crisis. When the president prepares a program and imposes it upon the Congress, its members complain that the executive is usurping the functions of the legislative branch. But when he addresses them as he did on the matter of the return of the railways to their former managements, saying that he has no solution to offer, Congress complains again that he is dodging the issue. In the meantime the things necessary to be done in the passage of the nation from war to peace are allowed to drift—fatal lack of policy!

## XIX

### LOCAL ACTIVITY IMPORTANT

**P**UBLIC credit must be used to prevent a state of unemployment, when by reason of the present plight of the world, or of extraordinary business disturbances, private employment fails. The reclamation of lands, the settlement of desirable people on such lands, the building of railways, waterways, improved main highways and countryside roads are works which should be planned for beforehand and undertaken the moment that unemployment appears in the country, and wherever it appears, and these works may easily be made to absorb any surplus labor; but these are not the only works that should be taken into consideration.

There are millions of acres of lands in the United States which have been stripped of their forest growth, which are not good agricultural lands and can not be made such. The work of reforestation of such lands is one that the nation and the states must undertake, or it will never be done. Nothing pays better than a forest; but its produc-

tion runs beyond the span of an individual's business life. It succeeds through processes too slow for the individual or the corporation; but the experiences of France and other foreign countries abundantly demonstrate that to the nation the planting of forests brings returns in many ways which are attractive and enticing. Our American troops in the terrible Battle of the Argonne Forest hewed their way through a region which no Frenchman could have waited to redeem to profitable use, but which France had redeemed by forestry. The reforestation of our lands which ought to be so treated might furnish immediate employment to a great many men, and would, while making sure that the nation in the future may not find itself in that timberless condition which has come upon some parts of China, for instance, through lack of prevision on the part of her governments, give permanent work to many useful men, put the business of forestry on a firm and scientific foundation, add something to our live-stock production, and take from us a little of the reproach which has come upon us, being a nation of wasters and spendthrifts of our natural resources.

All we require for the undertaking of this work, not as an emergency measure, but as the discharge

of a duty, in large part, too long neglected, is legislative originality, a little vision, and the ability on the part of our statesmen to display capacity and those qualities which prove that they are something besides merely titular statesmen. We now have a forest service, devoted largely to the preservation and safeguarding of the forest resources of our national domain. It is true that we have acquired some lands from private concerns on which national forests have been established; but nothing but the merest beginning has been made. There are sandy wastes, there are eroding mountainsides which are silting up our streams and destroying our waterways, there are great areas of light soils which ought not to be farmed, which should be acquired, not by the slow processes of negotiation, purchase and sale, but by condemnation, for forest purposes. If for no other reason—and this as a matter of fact is the least important reason—these lands should be withdrawn from market so as to prevent the pitiful spectacle, which presents itself to those who deal with agricultural conditions and with farm finance, of wave after wave of would-be farmers being lured upon these poor lands to lose their all in an endeavor to reclaim them and make farms of them. The na-

tional forest should take from the unscrupulous "colonizer" for ever his power to utter spurious homesteads and forged farms; and on the lands which are his stock in trade should be grown the timber for future generations.

All the things which have been considered as modes in which the public credit should be used to prevent unemployment are mainly matters within the scope of national and state activities; but cities, counties and municipal corporations generally are able to throw themselves into the breach for the defense of the returning soldier and others against unemployment. There are public buildings which are awaiting the auspicious moment to be built. The auspicious moment is not when business is booming and labor scarce, but when wages tend to drop and laborers are seeking work. Nothing should be done for the mere purpose of "making work"; there is so much which must sooner or later be done that the doing of unnecessary work is nothing short of a crime. That is why the workhouse, the municipal woodpile, manufactured means for giving work are all crimes. Even as to the mere matter of maintaining the laborer's self-respect, they are futile. Labor is never happy, contented, or self-respecting except



when it is engaged upon some task which satisfies, or will sometimes satisfy human wants and needs. All that is required in the exigency which may come upon us is that plans be made, authorizations given, and the preliminary steps be taken to do everything of this sort for which the public credit may be pledged, so as to keep the stream of employment flowing to useful ends whenever private enterprise for any cause flags and fails.

## XX

### THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL MORALE

**I**F we can only assimilate the lessons of this war it may become known as the beginning of the greatest era of progress in the history of the world. Washington has been full of specialists each doing his part in the great struggle; and many of them deem themselves in possession of the great secret of making the war pay for itself. "The new processes for the preservation of foods," says one, "will pay returns annually sufficient to pay the interest on our war bonds and to amortize them before they are due." "Our advance in ship-building," says another, "will give such an impulse to prosperity as to pay for the war." "The use of internal combustion engines for the propulsion of ships, using oil as the fuel, will pay the interest on our debt." "The education of our soldiers," says another, "is well bought at the expense of the war." "The lesson we have learned as to the perils of autocracy and the efficiency of democracy; and the making of democracy the issue of the world

war is cheap at the price in money, blood, and tears."

The pioneers of America used to make sugar from the sap of the maple; and after the watery juices had been boiled there took place a process which has given us one of our most expressive Americanisms. After the sap had been boiled it had to be "sugared off"; and the operation was a success or failure according to the results of the sugaring off process. The evils of the war are clear—we shall labor under dreadful burdens—and they are not to be escaped; but the benefits are in a very sappy condition. Benefits there have been, and greater benefits there may be in the future; but whether we shall reap any betterments from the war to be even remotely compared with its evils depends on the process of sugaring off those benefits. Unless we have a better country in which to live in myriads of ways, unless that deep dissatisfaction with his lot which has been for so long taking possession of the common man is removed by removing its causes so far as they are curable, and by making plain to him the extent to which they can not be ameliorated, this war will be ruinous to America. That we shall have to bear heavy burdens is clear—and that will make our

sociological condition more acutely difficult and the probabilities of disturbances and maladjustments immensely greater than they were even when we had civil war in the coal regions, transportation stagnation and riots along our railways, and bull-pens filled with turbulent miners in the past. In an era when every theorist of the Bolshevik school can strike terror to the rulers of any nation east of the Rhine, when those principles of majority rule on which our institutions are builded are challenged by a new invention in government as embodied in the soviets, when leadership in this movement is won in Europe by former dwellers in our own slums who hate us more bitterly than they hate czarism, when the propagandists of "direct action" in our own country are so deeply disturbing our thoughts by their revolt against the slow processes of development by majority rule, and our prisons are opened to receive agitators whom hundreds of thousands of good men devoutly love, when the world as a whole, including ourselves, is receiving back into the civil population millions and millions of men whose mental and moral processes have been deeply altered by the struggles through which they have passed, who know that they have saved their re-

spective countries, and will be prone to ask why, who will be organized and heroized and told that nothing is too good for them, who will ask pertinently where the good thing for them is to be had, when our civil population has been unsettled to an extent little less than that which is true of the soldiery—in such an era it will be well to await the crystallizing of these benefits in the sugaring off process before we count upon them too confidently. What this crystallization shall be depends upon our courage, our originality, and the willingness of our employing and our privileged classes to yield whatever is just to the masses. There are ways through development—wisdom's ways. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." There are no other pleasant or peaceful ways.

Among these specialists who have the keys to the future's locks, whose specialties will bring us benefits "sufficient to pay the costs of the war," are those who have had control of the spiritual element among the men engaged in the war. If you wish to communicate with them—I do not know that they wish to be communicated with—you must write to the Morale Branch, General Staff, War Department. Not any very large proportion

of my readers will have been aware that any such branch of the army organization exists; to most the word "morale" is one of vague signification having to do with the feelings and the spirits of any acting force of human beings. It may be well for us all to recall, therefore, that morale is moral or mental condition as regards courage, zeal, hope, confidence, "pep," cheerfulness. It is ordinarily applied as referring to a thing of the first order of importance, to men engaged in hazardous enterprises, like soldiers or sailors in time of war. Cæsar won the battle of Pharsalia by means of an improvement of the morale of his army, and gained the empire of the world by acting with reference to "that nice feeling of the moral pulse of armies on which the skill of great commanders has chiefly depended." Morale, however, is just as important in peace as in war; and unless we can find means of making the morale of our people in the years to come something like that of our soldiers at Chateau Thierry, in the St. Mihiel drive, and in the terrible struggle in the Argonne Forest, we shall not reap those benefits which all hope for from the war. Peace hath her victories no less than war—and also her defeats; and her victories depend upon morale.

Let us consider this matter further. Every reader remembers those young men who were summoned to the training camps—and did not want to go. Every observer has seen these same boys returning from camp on their first furloughs, proud of their uniforms, bronzed, toughened as to muscular fiber, absorbed in the work given them, ready for the fray. I remember one of them—who, be it remembered, did not want to go. Said I to him when he came back on his furlough, “Well, we are going to have a real army, are we?” “Real army!” said he, proud of his three months’ veteranship, “why if either side in the Civil War had had the men in my camp to-day, it wouldn’t have lasted six months!” He was getting morale. Every reader has seen the groups of soldiers returning to their homes after the armistice, those good-natured boys, treating every other man in uniform like a brother, singing those songs which are the audible sign of cheerfulness, contentment, esprit de corps, willingness to make the best of things, determination to win, scorn of the very idea of the possibility of defeat. This is morale—that morale which made our soldiers invincible, which led them to be absent without leave that they might join in the battle when their units were

resting, which enabled the men drowning under the guns of the submarine to sing "Where Do We Go From Here, Boys, Where Do We Go From Here," which made a fifty per cent. loss unavailing to stay our marines and our inexperienced soldiers when they started the ebb of the German tide at Chateau Thierry, which enabled our troops to beat the German veterans in open warfare after a training devoted mainly to trench warfare. It was morale—the spiritual element in war; the spiritual element in all human effort; the element neglected by most of our great employers of labor; the element which depends on that portion of the laborer's anatomy which is above the neck as opposed to what is below it. If we could only have the morale of our whole population looked after as well as the Morale Branch of the General Staff has looked after that of our soldiers and sailors!

Morale in ordinary life and common employments depends much upon contentment and satisfaction; and these depend on a consciousness of receiving just treatment. The I. W. W. represent the destruction of industrial morale. They declare that the worker should receive the whole social product of his labor. Millions of us believe that who have no sympathy with the I. W. W.; but



to other millions the I. W. W. demands based upon a principle of justice seem a perfect justification for I. W. W. methods. Those methods involve, first, the repudiation of majority rule and a public purpose based on majority will, and the adoption of the principle of "direct action" in wage demands, having for their purpose not the settlement of wage differences, but the abolition of profits to the employer, and various forms of sabotage adapted to the same ends. In other words, the I. W. W. is a war machine for an industrial revolution.

During the early months of the war there was some reason to fear that the activities of those favoring this sort of confessedly destructive direct action might be able to cripple our industries and either cause us to lose the war or render our victory one obtained in the face of something like civil war at home. The Department of Labor took up the matter of improving the morale of our workers. Teachers were trained by the Department to inculcate principles which would save the morale of the laborers from the agitation which was destructive of this morale. It was pointed out to the workers that no method has ever been perfected of determining what

the social value of any laborer's work actually is, and that the only mode known is the adjustment by means of wages. That mode may be imperfect, but the proposal of the agitators was still more imperfect. It aimed at the destruction of the present system without offering anything in its place, and was in fact purely destructive. In a perfectly democratic manner the case was argued out, and the fact established that the agitators were merely asking the workers to take a fateful leap in the dark. The result was such an improvement in the morale of the workers that the industries went on unhampered by the agitation. The labor forces had their minds cleared of some uncertainties and doubts. Confidence succeeded hesitation and irresolution. The same thing happened which occurs when in a military movement the minds of the soldiers are cleared of suspicions, fears, and false leadership.

This episode was a very important one in the war industries, and is as important for peace times as for the days of war; but it relates to a very small portion of the field of national morale. It would not be difficult to point out instances in which great industries have been built on the basis of superior morale in factory operatives. The

writer has seen a great department in an important industry crippled by low morale in the working force, caused almost entirely by low wages—a condition which was remedied by a reorganization which enabled the workers to earn more money. Increasing wages are often accompanied by decreased labor cost. Some very large industries must occur to the mind of the reader in which low cost of production is the rule in spite of abnormally high wages, and in which such low costs are attributed by the management to a high morale produced by high wages. It was the morale of the American sailor which enabled the American merchant marine in the old days of sailing vessels to pay the highest wages in the world, and still to compete with the low-wage merchant marines in freight rates. Every laborer, no matter whether his status be that of a skilled or an unskilled laborer, is something more than a body with hands and feet: he is a human being with a mind, a heart, and a soul. He is therefore a creature, whether he digs trenches for sewers, or winds armatures in an electrical works, in whom courage, zeal, hope, confidence, cheerfulness, a satisfied sense of justice, faith in leadership, everything which constitutes high morale in the soldier or the

sailor are of more importance than mere muscular strength or simple technical skill. In the future, we must be a nation of high industrial morale, or we must become more and more a nation of slaves and slave-drivers, with all the accompaniments of servile wars, fears, and tumults which go with slavery. The country has been saved by our victory—to what sort of future has it been saved? This is the supreme question of the years of the immediate future.

Since we entered the war the whole nation has become a great school. The army has been a wonderful system of schools. The navy, in which for years education has been a most important by-product of the regular life of the sailor, has become more of an educational system than ever. Each industry has gone to school; and there was never a time when so many great employers of labor faced the future with open minds as to the great industrial problems of the past as now. This is half-boiled sap—what shall be sugared off from it? This must be true, that we must carry over into the future the educational processes which have been imposed upon us by the war—employers must continue to go to school, and the thing which they must study is the laborer, his needs, his men-

tal processes, his demand for self-ownership, his soul, everything which makes up his morale.

It is safe to say that the working people of the nation never will demand of their employers anything which they think unjust, if they are fully informed as to the justice or injustice of the case. They will always be willing for capital to make its profits, and for the business to pay well its managers and superintendents. The trouble always has been that they do not as a rule have the faintest idea as to the condition of the business in which they are employed. The manager of a great iron business, in the early days of the war, told the writer of his troubles at the time when the government had fixed a certain price upon the pig-iron output of the furnaces. The established price was nearly four times the price for which pig iron had been sold at his works at times before the war. It was more than twice what he could have sold it for at the time of our conversation, and probably every working man employed in the works believed that at that very time the concern was making a net profit of from sixty to seventy per cent. From the standpoint of many employers, this was no business of the men; but my informant knew that these enormous profits were

destructive of the morale of the men. They felt that they should receive their bit of what they could not refrain from terming the swag—and they threatened a strike. The strike was averted; but the management expected the danger to recur, purely because of the exorbitant profits which the men believed that the concern was earning. The management would really have been glad to have had a law under which these excessive profits, calculated on a proper economic basis, might have been taken in taxation for the carrying on of the war, very largely because excessive profits were destructive of the morale of the men.

Fundamental honesty on the part of all employers of labor; complete frankness as to the conditions of the business; a joint study on the part of employers and employees of the business itself to the extent at least which will enable the leaders of the men to know as much of the firm's problems as the owners themselves know; a partnership in knowledge and cooperation in efforts—these may be too much to expect as a rule of American business. Employers lack faith in the loyalty of the men, and with good reason; for some of the men seeing nothing in most businesses which seems to command loyalty have definitely abandoned the

idea that there is anything in the relationship of employer and employee to call for any sentiment except that of inveterate antagonism; and the doctrine that the proper course on the part of the employee is to do as little as possible for as much as can be got is wide-spread. Yet, unless the concern is willing to put itself in a position to command the respect of the operatives for the wage scale and the conditions of employment, there is no way out save through this inveterate enmity with all that it has entailed in the past, and all the problematical things which it may entail in the future.

America can not win its victories of peace except through better national morale. We must become a university in which every citizen shall be matriculated if we win those triumphs which ought to be ours. The solution may not be suggested here; but it will be found if it is honestly sought with the purpose of giving up everything wrongfully enjoyed as the wrongfulness appears. This nation has no tolerable future except as it is attained through education—and the best fruits of the war so far lies in its educational value, in patriotism, in valor, in cooperation, in science, in invention, in glimpses of fraternity too precious to be lost, and in our heightened national morale.

## XXI

### WHY CITIES ABSORB POPULATION

**I**N considering the expedients which must be adopted for breaking the great shock of the passage from war to peace—for it must be a great shock, whether we slip through without an industrial collapse as some believe we shall do or not—we are prone to think of the situation in terms of men only, or of men and women as they happen to be engaged in work for which they are carried on some one's payroll. Good times, however, are essential to those who employ themselves, to those who live upon their incomes which in themselves are dependent on prosperity, to our population in general. All land settlements are dependent on the morale of our country-dwellers, and that in turn is dependent on prosperity, and on living conditions. Back of the moral and mental tone of all our workers lies the industrially submerged three-sevenths of our adult population, the women who keep the homes, rear the children, prepare the food, and hold the families together; and their



morale and that of their husbands and brothers depends to a degree not often comprehended on what is happening to the children. The national morale depends on the morale of the women; and that in turn depends greatly on conditions of child-life. This is as it should be; and it proves that the women are discharging their immemorial function, that of acting as the conservators of the race itself.

It may be that we shall not regain those hordes of unmarried men who have done the unskilled work of the nation to such a large extent in the past, and who have been drained off to Europe during the course of the war in which for the most part their own countries have been engaged; and that those who remain among us will go home when the opportunity presents itself. This question must await the decisions of the issues discussed in this book. If our foreign competitors in business, our allies or our foes in war only a few months ago, carry their war activities over into peace with the audacity, the courage, and the vision which seems to characterize their promises at the present time, and especially if the United States and the states of our Union continue to lapse back into vain mouthings, puerile bickerings over

dead and gone issues, sterile skirmishes for party advantage, and exhausting struggles in a tug-of-war to determine in whose partisan territory that nothing which is promised shall be done—if things go as they are going now, in brief—the foreign countries will get their young men back from America. We shall not be able to hold men here who, other things being equal, may be expected to prefer Europe. The industries of the United States will then be obliged to adjust themselves to a new labor situation; and unskilled occupations must be made attractive to men with families, or America must adjust herself to an era of forced celibacy on the part of that portion of society which must always be the most important from the racial view-point—the mudsills of society, on which it rests and by which it is borne up either in safety or peril as the sills may be sound or rotten.

Whether the Europeans go or stay, we can not face the future intelligently without considering the question of the morale of our women and the influence upon them of living conditions for children. If the Europeans stay, they should be Americanized. If they are Americanized it must be by making them desire to marry and bring up families of American children. Americanization

means education—education of ourselves to know and appreciate our immigrants, and education of the immigrants and their children so as to enable them to understand us, to think as we do, to speak and read our language, to desire that they and their children may live under the American flag forever. In other words, there must be a building up of an American morale on the part of the Jew, the Pole, the Bohemian, the Croatian, the Bulgar, the Greek, the Armenian, the Italian, the Austrian, the German—of all our immigrants—and an answering morale on our part toward them. The change in us must necessarily be as great as that which we demand in them; and this change must be in large part in our young people, and in theirs. For the middle-aged and the old the case is largely lost; habit is too strong, both in us and in them; but the nation's life is long, and a few years are only a moment. The children are free of race consciousness, and they are thrown together in the schools; and in the schools most of those processes have gone on which have enabled us to assimilate our millions of Western Europeans in the manner which gave Germany the greatest surprise of the war.

Without minifying the influence of any other

factor in the case, it seems clear that we must rely on the school in the future as in the past, for governmental touch with those permanent elements which develop citizenship, and which build up the morale of the women by serving the children, and, acting in conjunction with other factors, maintain the morale of the men of America. Economic conditions must exist which will make it possible for a working man to marry and rear children; he must be given more and more fully the opportunity to live a free and unfearing life; these are conditions precedent to any tolerable sort of national life; but given these, the working out of that life, especially in a nation the masses of which are of such a mixture of nationalities and racial stocks as that which constitutes our people, must constantly center more and more on that one agency which touches the whole people, and which is growing into touch with them in more and more complex ways, the public schools. That this is true in the cities and towns most people will freely admit; but it is the opinion of the writer that it is still more critically true in the country.

If one desires to see how present-day conditions affect the distribution of population between country and city, he needs only to study the story of

Australia. The history of this continent as a real factor in population dates back only about fifty years and seems to show the effects of the modern influences working upon intelligent populations which are producing those tremendous phenomena which may be grouped under the head of the over-urbanization of the world, the growth of cities at the expense of country living, and which will soon, if unchecked, make the United States, in spite of its immense agricultural potentialities, a food-importing nation. This tendency to the absorption of the population in the cities is not only so powerful as to be portentous, but it is an accelerating one—it gets worse all the time. In 1906 the population of Australia was 4,118,000, of which the cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart contained 1,435,000, and there were thirteen other towns of more than 10,000 inhabitants; but the tendency of the people to swarm into the cities has been so great that now, according to that well-informed writer, Doctor Elwood Mead, who held an official position on the land-settlement commission of Australia, one-third of the population is (or recently was) in two cities, and more than one-half in five cities. The United States was pretty well settled before this influence

became so powerful, and after Australia was settled our great areas of agricultural lands west of the Mississippi came into the market; but it seems safe to say that if the settlement of the United States had been postponed until the full development of our present industrial system had taken place, our situation would have been quite as bad from the view-point of those who regard this as an overgrowth of the cities as that of Australia. Indeed, it is a question whether or not, all things considered, it is not quite as bad now.

Our land system accounts for much of this tendency. But a good deal of it may be accounted for by a lowered and constantly lowering morale in rural life; and this low state of our country population as to contentment, enthusiasm, confidence in ability to win success, pride in institutions, that feeling of superiority which counts so much in the soldier and is equally potent in the civilian, may be traced to lack of social organization manifesting itself in many industrial disadvantages, and especially in poor schools. These things cause wide-spread discontent and a depression of that spirit which is essential to right community living; and especially in the women of the farms it produces a lack of faith in the future, particularly

for the children. The failure to make money, the hard work, the lack of social advantages—all these and many other reasons are urged by farm women who are using their influence upon the family either to remove to the town or city; but the invariable reason which accompanies the others is the argument that the removal is desirable in order that the children may have a better chance in the world.

This argument is most forceful with the most intelligent people. It tends to rob the countryside of those whose presence is essential to the betterment of things, and to leave on the farms those lacking in forethought and enterprise. No land-settlement system can succeed against its might—and I propose to show that there is no way in which the perfectly sound arguments of the best farm families for removal to the cities can be answered, save by a reformation of rural life by a better system of rural schools.

## XXII

### RURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL MORALE

**I**NVESTIGATORS of rural conditions have not as a rule recognized the causal relations existing between low rural morale and lack of opportunity for children in the open country. Great weight has been given, and justly, too, to the isolation of the women and the solitary drudgery to which many of them are condemned, a drudgery intensified in its weight by lack of such facilities as town housekeepers possess for lightening the work of the household. Women, however, live in their children, and constantly propound to their men folk on the farms the question as to whether it is worth while to accept nothing more for the young people than the country offers, especially in view of the fact that most farmers, especially tenant farmers, know from experience what the agricultural economists have worked out from statistics, that the returns for labor are as low on the farms as those received by the unskilled laborer in town. A certain sort of security in employment



the farmer undoubtedly possesses which the town laborer has not, and the economic returns are greater than the figures seem to show, but the risk of change is not great and the benefits to the children are in many important ways clear and indisputable. All these town advantages have their countervailing drawbacks; but the advantages are immediate, and the drawbacks are developed only through experience. To a vast number of these women the city with its high schools and colleges, its electric lights and gas, its household conveniences, its high wages, its opportunity for employment for the young people in clerical positions and in skilled trades, its amusements, its churches, its teeming life, seems a paradise as compared with the farm, and to a lesser number of the men it presents itself in the same light. In short, the American farmer is a person of too high a grade of intelligence to accept farm conditions as they exist on the majority of American farms. He must sink lower or he must have better things. If he be personally willing to stay on the farm, his wife and the claims of his children will unsettle him.

Neither have students of rural sociology generally been able to see the controlling power of the

rural school over this situation. Our great educators have failed to recognize the fact that the rural school not only constitutes our chief educational problem, but that it offers to us our greatest educational opportunity. Here and there a new kind of rural school has been coming into existence, not only different from any city school, but superior to it. Such educators as Benson, Tobin, and Jessie Field, working up from the bottom as Froebel and Pestalozzi worked, have demonstrated that in the very life which envelopes the rural school, in the very physical surroundings of the rural schoolhouse there is an educational equipment which is the best in the world, which is a part of the life of the children and their parents—is in fact that life—which no city school can possibly possess, and the study of which by the school gives all in merely scholastic acquirements which the best school can be asked to give, and which so enters into the life of the neighborhood as to enroll parents as well as children in the personnel of the school, to the end that a change of the most basic sort is set up in the attitude of the whole society toward country life. Benson, a county superintendent of schools in a rural county of Iowa, found by means of a questionnaire that more than four-

fifths of the boys and nearly all the girls had made up their minds that when they grew up they would leave the farms. By a similar questionnaire two years later he demonstrated the fact that four-fifths of the girls and nearly all the boys in the same schools were planning on spending their whole lives on the farm. This result had been accomplished by a change in the educational policy of the county. It will take place wherever the rural schools are correlated with rural life so as to develop the absorbingly interesting matters with which rural life abounds.

I hesitate to set down here the apparently small change in school methods which accomplished this remarkable change in the morale of the children, for fear that the statement will not be credited. I should not do so if I had not investigated rural school systems of the new sort and found the same result everywhere. No one will be likely to credit the statement, however, unless he considers what the accepted type of rural school really is and always has been, the type which not only has not reconciled the people of the country to country conditions by showing them its beauties and its interest, but has actually contributed to the lowering of rural morale by weaning them from it. The

average rural school always has been, and still is, on the whole, a poor imitation of a bad city school. The teacher has been town bred and has had no training for rural school work. There have not been, and in adequate number there are not now, any normal schools for the training of rural teachers. The salaries of these teachers have always been, and in the main are now, too low to justify the demand for special training even if it were obtainable. The best available type of rural school teacher is the girl who has graduated from a town high school and is teaching a rural school to bridge over the gap between her school life and some city employment or her marriage. Her ideal of excellence in any school is a close approximation in every respect to the school in which she studied; and failing in attaining this ideal, which is, fortunately, an unattainable one, she contents herself with giving the children the most she can of the three R's, and whatever else is required by the course of study. The work is divorced from life, bookish in a poor sort of way, dry, and interesting to those children only who like books as books and take to them in revolt against the life of the farm. Wherever it touches life, it relates to the only life the teacher knows anything about, town life. The

child who comes to that school with any such problem as the cause of cedar rust in apples, the life history of any bird or insect which is doing good or harm to the interests of the farm, the proper ration for milch cows or fowls, the profits of the silo as compared with the feeding of cured forage, is sure to go unanswered, and is sent back to the immemorial dry-as-dust drudgery of the textbooks.

Now we may consider what Benson's initial experiment was. It consisted merely in introducing in the schools of his county instruction in domestic economy and the household arts for the girls, and practical studies in farm economics and husbandry for the boys. This it was which turned the minds of the children of a great Iowa county countryward in two years! The same thing took place in the schools of another Iowa county under Miss Jessie Field. Five years after she made her timid beginning in the correlation of the work of the rural schools with the prevailing rural life, the teaching force had been transformed from a corps of poor to a corps of good teachers; but the morale of the farmers, both adults and youth, had been raised to a high pitch of enthusiasm and pride. Tobin, county superintendent of the rural schools

of Cook County, Illinois, has worked a similar reform in the morale of the farm people living in the very outskirts of Chicago. Instances of the same sort are becoming more and more common. The prevailing rural morale may be transformed through the rural schools—so much may be proved by the experience in many places to any who may choose to investigate. What is now needed is a crusade which will carry this fundamental reform to every country school in the nation.

To the mind which is skeptical as to this matter—and skepticism is quite the proper attitude to the uninformed mind—the manner in which this correlation between the rural school and farm life works out, the depths which it plumbs in rural sociology, must be described in order that it may be convincing. In the first place the average farm dweller lives with and deals with a set of conditions rich in charm and full of fruits for the investigative mind, without being in any concrete way aware of the fact. In all our literature we find rural life depicted as something simple, an existence of bucolic beauty, in which fleecy sheep, lowing kine, babbling brooks, mossy stones, warbling birds, vernal showers, downy snows, green trees, lush meadows, and all the properties of the

stage-craft of literature are supposed to make life happy to all save perverse and fallen minds. The people of the farms read these things and know that they are only things which they are expected to see, but which are so far as they make for happiness and content non-existent. Only a few of our farm people are poets. To all others the traditional tone of our literature, and of those who are fed upon it, is a false tone.

Instead of being simple, farm life is very complex. It ought to levy tribute upon most of the important sciences. Its problems occupy the attention of many of our most profound scientists and laboratory workers. The results of a vast mass of experimentation are embodied in a voluminous literature relating to farm problems, and farm life at its fullest and best must involve the study of this literature, and demands the application of its principles to the conditions on every farm and their modification in the light of local experience. This is the field into which the first of the three R's leads in the new kind of rural school, even to the beginner who uses his elementary knowledge in ways related to what must follow as he masters the printed page. Such investigations—for each school becomes a laboratory for research into the

mysteries of the every-day life of the community—call upon the learners for a greater and greater degree of skill in computation; and by the time the pupils have attained any considerable degree of skill in reading, writing and arithmetic, several fields of science have been invaded.

Biology is entered upon in the simplest lessons on the balance of life as related to agriculture—the very processes of growing a crop is a crucial biological experiment on the success or failure of which depends the living of the family. The prevailing lack of knowledge as to the life history of the insect pests of the farm, the relation of bird life, reptilian life, and mammalian life to this problem in entomology makes demands season by season on the school—and the subject is approached by such easy stages as the use of Paris green in the extermination of potato bugs, the eradication of the cattle tick, the use of turkeys as a profitable means of controlling the grasshopper pest. The diseases of animals and plants lead into the realms of bacteriology and sanitation, and the control of the ravages, smuts, rusts, wilts, blights and other crop pests leads not only to the sciences involved, but to the chemistry which deals with the control. All these things relate back to agricul-



tural economics, which stated in terms of success or failure in dollars and cents on the farm this year is not so forbidding as it might be if the name were used.

The study of all these things as related to the live stock, the poultry, and the crops, carries with it the knowledge of its application to ourselves, almost without having the pupil's attention called to the connection. The sanitation of the farm includes the sanitation of the house; and the safeguards against hog cholera, glanders, or anthrax leads to knowledge as to the prevention of typhoid, malaria and other diseases of human beings.

To the girls, in addition to their interest in matters of the sort above referred to, the work of the schools centers about clothes, foods, and house-keeping generally. A gasoline stove and a few kitchen utensils in a country schoolhouse, in the hands of an earnest teacher, work a metamorphosis of conditions. I have heard the mother of a fourteen-year-old girl—the mother herself a notable housewife—boast that she could put up fruit as well as could her daughter—the latter having won a prize as the best canner in her county among the schoolgirls. The mothers of daughters enrolled in such a school no longer keep aloof from

the school; but are practically members of it; and the father of the boy who by applying the Babcock tester to the milk yielded by the cows of the farm shows that exact knowledge is better than the empirical opinions as to production which have guided the father, has made that father a member de facto of the school. Thus the family is drawn into the circle of investigators.

Marketing problems, and the community action required for the control of many conditions, plus the clear advantages of cooperative action in breeding, added to the influence of the numerous clubs into which the pupils are organized, make the school a nursery of the cooperative movement. The local society becomes integrated, and the community soul begins to have being. The church profits by this fact, and by the livelier intellectual life of the district. Boys and girls come up and take their places in the community who for the first time are to a considerable degree masters of their business, know its economics, have some knowledge of its various sciences. They are engrossed in it, and proud of it. They know what can be done and what can not be done. They possess that knowledge which enables them to go back to the literature of rural life and enjoy it.

Indeed, no schools are more successful in generating love for pure literature than such rural schools as these—I have seen in one of them a class of little ones dressed as ears of corn, reciting, to a sort of dance, a kind of libretto composed of selections from Longfellow, Whittier and Emerson, the liaison between the authors being supplied by verses written by their teacher. I have seen in one such school a boy solving mathematical problems the statement of which were too complex for me. These boys and girls are habituated to the handling of real problems, almost from the day of entering school—problems of actual life. Therefore, while acquiring all the purely formal knowledge which any school should be required to teach, they have lived a vivid intellectual life, always grasping, or grasping at realities, instead of repeating things parrot-like. If they remain in the country they are equipped to take care of themselves, to engage with life confidently, and to keep their souls alive through the consciousness that their lives are as large intellectually as they care to make them. Their educations are a by-product of their lives. If they leave the farm, they will win honors in the universities, and they will make better bankers, better factory managers, better

merchants, better professional men, better poets, better sculptors and better painters and engineers than will their fellows bred in the city schools. And the morale of rural life will be built up with the result that population will begin again to flow back from city to country.

Until the needs of the women and children are looked after, it is useless to settle men on farms; and no land-settlement projects are likely to be successful except as social conditions and educational opportunities are improved. The morale of rural life has suffered by reason of its economic drawbacks; but it has gone lower than the point to which its economic drawbacks alone could have depressed it. Give the farmers of the country the education they need by making their education by-products of laboratory work carried on in the schools, and they will once more rule the nation; and incidentally they will solve their economic problems: for they will know the truth.

## XXIII

### HOW THE FARM MIGHT CALL

**I**T is with a feeling akin to despair that I venture to state to the American public and the publics of such other parts of the world as may chance to read these lines, the essential necessity of a new educational system as a means of readjustment to the problems of peace. We are prone to plume ourselves upon the assumed fact that we have made in education something like the same amount of progress which we have achieved in science and the arts, both peaceful and military; but no error could be more complete. Our system of education is vastly inferior to that of ancient Greece, if the objects sought be considered. The Greek states were military organizations, in which the national object was to breed up a race of men of the ruling class who could defend the state on the battle-field and carry its armies into the territory of any state the invasion of which might be determined upon, and to bring up a race of women fit to become the mothers of such a race of soldiers. The

barrack-like life to which the youth of Greece were subjected was admirably adapted to accomplish such an object. The Greek system of education worked magnificently. So of the early Roman system of education, in which the son learned the laws of his country in the hearings held by his father dealing with the affairs of clients, the boy drinking in the manners, the morals, and the virtues of a Roman citizen by taking part in the actual affairs of public life. These ancient systems of education could not serve a democracy, but they had no democratic object. Considering their object, they were better than our system—they were as much superior to ours as was that of the Sioux or Apache Indian in which the boys and girls actually did as elements of their games what their fathers and mothers did as the serious occupations of life. Education was life.

Ever since this nation was established we have been struggling for universal education. The extent to which education might be disseminated among the people was the thing before our minds, and the sort of education was always secondary. Horace Mann won the title of America's greatest educationist, and after a long and honorable career in his own state of Massachusetts, as well as in

Washington, his last work was the establishment of a college in a little town in Ohio, in which he taught, what?—"political economy, intellectual and moral philosophy, and natural theology!" A purely bookish chair was that of Professor Mann, with no possible interest for any but bookish students, offering no bridge over which the mind of the unbookish boy or girl might pass from things known and already done to things unknown and hitherto undone. And it was to the end that such schools as these might be universal that Horace Mann devoted his splendid life.

And this was no small or despicable end; for Mann realized this great truth—that in a democracy education must be universal; so he worked for that sort of universal education of which he knew. The credit which is due him may be estimated by a consideration of the fact that about the time of Mann's birth, Rousseau, the philosopher of the French Revolution, declared that the children of the poor need no education—so slow was the development of the idea of the necessity in the modern state of an educated citizenry! Prior to this time, and over much of the world since, the great educational struggle has been over the question as to whether the church or the state should

see to the education of the citizen—as to who should do the work, and not what should be done.

Worship at the shrines of Pestalozzi and Froebel is enjoined as a matter of course upon every educator, from the university president to the rural teacher; just as the Sermon on the Mount is reverently quoted by every formal Christian. In both cases the disciple, in the majority of cases, fails even to attempt to follow the leader. It was Pestalozzi, the great Swiss educational reformer, who first preached the general education of the poor. He began publishing his books when Horace Mann was four years old. His philosophy was seized upon by Prussia as a reconstruction measure after the great defeat at Jena. Pestalozzi himself first visualized to the world his system of education in his *Leonard and Gertrude*, a story showing the gradual reformation, first of a household, then of a village, by an inspired teacher. He used his system as a practical measure of reconstruction after the invasion of Switzerland by the French in 1798, when Horace Mann was eighteen years old, by gathering under his wing a group of children left without parents, home, friends or sustenance, and devoting himself to their reclamation.



This master of all educators went to Paris in 1802 and endeavored to enlist the influence of Napoleon in a scheme of universal national education; but Bonaparte said that he could not trouble himself about the alphabet—thus showing a double misconception, first as regards the scope of the efforts of a great statesman, and second, regarding the scope of Pestalozzi's system of education. Though he left Napoleon cold, he set the world of thought on fire. Among the fires kindled was the pure educational flame in the mind of Froebel, whose life coincided in time within half a dozen years with that of Horace Mann. He gave to the world the kindergarten, not for the purpose of giving to the very young children a different sort of education from that given to the older ones, but that they might have the same principles applied to their training from the beginning to the end. These principles are these—that the educator creates nothing in the minds of the children; he only superintends the development of inborn faculties. Pestalozzi believed in the development of faculties by exercise; but Froebel's education was the development of inborn faculties by voluntary activity. Let the uneducated act, under superintendence, from inner impulses, and education results.

I need make no argument for these principles. Every educator, no matter how poor an educator he may be, must assent to them, because they have become a part of the general educational confession of faith.

The trouble with our schools is that faith without works is dead. The pathetic thing in American school history lies in the fact that these principles are constantly reappearing in new forms, and as constantly failing through the unfaith and inability of our educators. A generation or so ago Colonel Parker of Quincy, came to the fore with his *Quincy Methods* and his *Learn to Do By Doing*; and he was absorbed into the putty-like body of the educators of the country leaving scarcely a trace. A page could be filled with the annals of similar little Pestalozzian-Froebelian eddies in the oozy current of American education—all counting for something in the way of benefit, but altogether not amounting to very much; for still, in the vast majority of schools in the United States, the pupil is given so many pages of a book to memorize as his daily task, and still, the rural teachers in whose schools text-books on agriculture are made a part of the curriculum, complain that they are scarcely able to get the pupils to read them! Even

the teaching of agriculture out on the farm itself is sicklied over with the pale cast of bookishness.

The above may seem like a digression, but it is nothing of the sort. It lays the foundation for a plea for a reconstruction of our schools as a means of accomplishing the ends for which we have fought, and of binding up the wounds sustained in the battle. The ends for which we have fought, are broadly (1) a better democracy, and to that end, (2) a higher rural morale so that the balance between rural and urban population may be restored, (3) education in cities, towns and villages based on life instead of books, (4) a democratic attitude toward and preparation for national defense, and (5) Americanization of our society by a mingling of Americans and those elements of our population which have recently come among us in the study and discussion of matters of common interest. The wounds to be bound up are in part, (1) the re-education and establishment in social usefulness of the wounded and disabled, (2) the employment of those industrially unsettled by the war, (3) the settlement on the land of those whose residence on farms may be industrially desirable under conditions which will make such a life permanently acceptable to them

and their wives and children, and (4) the economic assistance of other peoples to the end that the world may be a tolerable place in which to dwell for others as well as ourselves. Several of these items have already been considered, and suggestions made as to the influence upon them of education. Others of them must be considered as fundamentally educational problems.

A national system of education may be made to serve the interests of democracy, plutocracy, oligarchy, theocracy, or autocracy—in fact, of any system of government which may seize upon it. After Jena, the Prussian autocracy seized upon Pestalozzi's idea of universal education—and built up the great autocratic machine which has brought the world to its present crisis. The changes which have taken place in Germany since the armistice show that no system of education can bind a people to an autocracy which fails; but the similar course of things in Russia obscures the moral. It may be taken for granted, however, that no democracy can perpetuate itself unless the people be intelligent. Education may or may not render people intelligent—it depends upon the system adopted; but hitherto, our bookish system of teaching, based on a state of society in which mili-

tary, clerical, and the learned professions were assumed to be the end of all education, has brought to us a sufficient average enlightenment to preserve us as a nation until now. But every thinker sees that our real trials as a nation are still before us. Our lands have mainly lapsed into private ownership. Free opportunities for self-employment have almost ceased to exist. Most people pay rent for the lands they use. The possession of a job is coming to be a prime essential to the lives of most Americans. Conditions of employment and the rate of wages are becoming all-important. Revolutionary ideas as to property rights are gaining headway. The corporation divorces the owners of employing establishments from their management. Men are becoming class-conscious. Warring forces begin to throw larger and larger elements into relations of enmity to each other. And yet, if every one knew as much of the conditions of life and business as might be known ways could certainly be found for composing most of our differences; and further, if momentous changes are to be made, they will almost certainly be harmful unless the changes are charted in the light of knowledge—and general knowledge—beforehand. Therefore, whether we perfect the

present system so as to make it just, or change it over to another which shall be just, we shall need a public educated to a far higher degree of general intelligence as to the processes of our individual, social and political lives than is the American public of to-day. I remember a lesson in an old school reader which used to thrill me with terror. It opened with this sentence "We must educate, we must educate, or we perish in our own prosperity!" Another passage ran, "It took Rome three hundred years to die; and our death if we perish will be as much more terrible than hers as our development has been more rapid and wonderful." I have not read these sentences for more than half a century; education as conceived by their author we have had in a rich poverty; but the appeal made and the danger pointed out seem to be as valid and apparent now as then.

Froebel gained his first insight into educational principles by walking about the forests and open fields; and Pestalozzi's first school was in his own farm-house. The kindergarten is a children's garden, and its inventor required that each child cultivate its own plot of soil. Educational reformers always look to the soil, to the fields, to plants, flowers, and domestic animals, to rural

conditions for their ideal educational milieu. In any city in which the schools feel any real wind from the uplands of educational thought, one finds gardens, pets, flowers, every rural thing which can be transplanted to the region of pavements and skyscrapers. In spite of the fact, however, that any rural neighborhood constitutes, in any proper educational system, the best educational equipment in the world, a far better equipment than any city school can hope to possess, three generations of country children have been led off to the city by their parents, especially their mothers, in order that they might have better educational facilities—which is what is meant by the average American parent when he says “a better chance in the world.” No more striking evidence could be presented of the fact that our educators have lost sight of those historic beacons in educational thought by which they have been supposed to steer their courses.

The truth, however, will not always be without her witnesses; and there is building up in the rural schools of the United States, without much aid from educational leaders, a new Pestalozzianism, a new Froebelism, with something new added—something more than Pestalozzi's development of

faculties by exercise, something more than Froebel's development of the individual through activities impelled by inner impulses, something more than Parker's "Learn to do by doing." This new Something is nothing less than the urge to intellectual development through the conscious service of the family and the community by the actual study of that wonderfully interesting and charming series of individual, sociological, historical, and scientific problems the understanding of which is necessary to the practise of argiculture. This new kind of rural school actually exists in many localities. It exists nowhere in perfect form. It is everywhere a compromise between the old-fashioned bookish school and the new sort of vital institution. Such compromises are forced by many influences—the established curriculum having back of it the sanctions of law; the confusion of thought in the teachers themselves, largely caused by lack of leadership; the traditions which bind teachers, pupils, school boards, and superintendents; the overpowering conservatism of educational leaders, who for nearly two hundred years have confessed a faith which they have not practised; the financial interests of those who deal in books and apparatus which



pertain to bookish and mechanical educational processes; all that is connoted by the word inertia; but in spite of these things the new kind of rural school is here. It is coming up as all great reforms come up, from the bottom. Its very lack of precision and uniformity augurs well for its future; for it proves that the new system is growing. It comes into being, not through any study of educational philosophy by those responsible for it; but in response to the urgent need in rural communities of a better and more satisfying intellectual life. Elsewhere<sup>1</sup> the writer has endeavored to show the synthesis of a rural community under the influence of such an educational system. Here he can only hint at some of its elements.

The new kind of rural school may be housed in an old-fashioned one-room school, or in a consolidated school to which many of the pupils are transported at public expense; it may comprise from half a dozen pupils to two or three hundred. It will, of course, give to each pupil instruction in the three R's, in geography, spelling, history, physiology, and the other common branches of learning. It may, in fact, follow the regular

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<sup>1</sup>*The Brown Mouse*, Bobbs-Merrill, 1915.

*The Fairview Idea*, Bobbs-Merrill, 1919.

course of study established by the state for that sort of school. If so, it will turn out better readers, better penmen, better mathematicians, and more intelligent students of history, geography and the other branches than will the ordinary bookish school; for all its pupils will, from the beginning of their respective school lives, each to the extent of his acquirements and abilities, use the ability to read, write and compute, in the actual problems of his family, and of the community.

The school will, for instance, test the seed-corn of the neighborhood, for viability. The testing-frames will be made for actual use—a lesson in manual training. The temperature will be observed and maintained—a biological experiment. The sprouts will be rated as to vigor—a lesson in applied botany. The beginners in mathematics will count the bad kernels and subtract them from the good; and the older ones will calculate the percentages. The final determination as to whether or not the corn of any given lot should be planted is a complex problem of farming in which the judgment of the best minds in the vicinity should be consulted. On the results of these observations and computations and judgments will de-

pend, when these schools are the rule and not the exception, the yield of corn for the nation, and the price of the meat on the table of the reader; but the children of the schools will thrill to the consciousness of the mysteries of nature and the interrelations of mind and prosperity.

While this series of determination is going on, the poultry industry, on which depends the presence of the reader's morning soft-boiled egg, its quality and its price, is also undergoing study. The construction of the poultry house, the nests, the brooders, the incubators, and the like, offer practical lessons in manual training, the results of which are structures put to use on the farm, and not junk to be disposed of as in the average city home or school. The discussion of breeds and the comparative merits of the Asiatic and the Mediterranean varieties—the very words Shanghai, Bantam, Ancon, Leghorn, Brahma, Cochin—lead into geography and history, as do also their American derivatives, Plymouth Rock, Rhode Island Red. Debates on the matter develop the fact that each breed has its merits. The reading of the class puts the members in possession of the fact that all hens possess the capacity to lay a certain number of eggs a year—say seventy-five

or a hundred. This capacity is the common possession of the race of fowls; but some hens have an additional faculty—that of laying an excess number of eggs. This is an inheritable quality. How is it inherited? May a farmer by breeding from those hens only which lay this excess number of eggs breed up his fowls so that each will lay two hundred, two hundred and fifty eggs a year? No; not if the breeding is done in that haphazard manner. For the ability to lay an excess number of eggs is a separate genetic unit—and the children will soon be talking glibly about genetic units—and is inherited, not directly from mother by daughter, but indirectly, through the son to the granddaughter. Have no fear, the children will be interested in these matters—the prosperity of their families, and perhaps, their own spending money, depends upon it. And in this study, every step of which is related to the farm, we have manual training, arithmetic, the Mendelian philosophy of heredity, geography, history, nutrition, physiology, economics; and if marketing is taken into account, neighborhood cooperation.

One more illustration. The money crop of the neighborhood is wheat. There are blight and rust and foul weeds to be contended with. Why has

it been that the wheat has failed to fill in past years, and what can be done about it? There is a good deal to learn in bulletins written in popular language, and a lecturer from the state college of agriculture will come and tell the pupils all that is known about the trouble. Perhaps one trouble is chinch bugs. It turns out that these insects hibernate in dead grass, under bushes, along roadsides, and that nothing but a neighborhood campaign for destroying them in their winter quarters will suffice. It may be that a rotation system is indicated; and then the study develops into the symbiotic relations between the bacteria in the nodules on the roots of clover, alfalfa or other leguminous crops, and the fixation of the nitrogen in the air by these friendly little symbiotes. Or it turns out that seed to be sown in the spring ought to be treated with chemicals to kill the spores of smut. We have used long and technical words, here, but the pupils in the new kind of rural school will use many of them unconsciously, because they are familiar with the thing itself. Perhaps they will not speak of "symbiotic relations," but they will observe the nodules on the roots of the clover, and will understand that they mean fertility to the soil, and a

better crop next year. I will allow the reader to list the sciences into which these pupils are given glimpses in these class studies in next year's crop of grain.

But the study runs further. It goes to the marketing of the grain, and perhaps to the cooperative elevator, and the oppressions of the Grain Trust. It carries the studies in geography and transportation to the terminal elevator, the boat line, the Barge Canal. It leads back to the farm bookkeeping system and the question as to whether grain raising pays, and if not why not. The primary pupil who began at five by counting the cockle-seeds in a saucerful of wheat, at the age of twenty is still in the same rural school, doing first-hand investigative work on things which relate to his own future, the future of his family, his opportunities for supporting a wife and family, matters which will determine how that first vote of his will be cast next fall, and, perhaps, the character of an administration.

For this sort of school merges the school life of the tiniest pupil with his home life, merges the lives of a vast number of adults of the community with the life of the school, and leads inevitably into a merger of economic life with the political

life of the locality and the state. It educates for democracy.

The importance of these matters in the local life, the fact that a new era dawns with the development of an active school, may be seen by him who knows the countryside from the following excerpts from a single issue of a farm paper published in the South, *The Progressive Farmer*:

"The first step forward was voting local tax, building a large two-story building, painting buildings, and beautifying the school grounds. Then we organized a Woman's Betterment Society which met regularly once a month, discussed timely subjects, had debates and contests on helpful subjects. We changed often enough to keep up interest. We decided to buy a piano and put seats in our auditorium. We had musicals, employing our best city talents, and charging a small admission fee. We had a Fourth of July celebration, threw in and made a big Brunswick stew and sold this, also cake, pies, pickles, sandwiches and cream. On the afternoon of July Fourth we had a patriotic lecture, went out and sold supper, returned and had patriotic songs, drills and plays.

"Our bank-account gradually grew despite the fact that the society purchased all sorts of con-

veniences for the school. We had demonstrations by our home demonstration agent, lectures and stereoscopic views on health and sanitation by our health officer. We made money by giving box parties, fiddlers' conventions, plays, Hallowe'en and Valentine parties, etc. The most glorious time of all and the time we finished raising money for the piano and to seat our auditorium was our Community Fair. We worked, laughed and played. We sold barbecue and Brunswick stew to all at a reasonable price and realized a neat little sum.

"Unfortunately, however, this community, which was embraced in one school district, was about equally divided by a branch whose black, sticky sediment and raging torrents at times were an insurmountable barrier to school children. It isn't necessary to speak of the inconvenience which this caused—of the dissatisfaction in school affairs—of how two schoolhouses were finally built—one in the north end and one in the south end—of the wrangles in the general school elections—of short terms and poor teachers, since the funds had to be divided; but it is a fact that the large community, in feeling, in sentiment, in singleness of purpose, was split. Bitter jealousies sprang



up; neighbors grew distant; bonds of friendship, two generations old, were broken. All this, while the children we dearly loved, for whom we toiled, and for whom we were ambitious, grew up in ignorance. It was wrong. We all knew it, but stubbornness is the key that has locked the school-house door against many eager children who have gone through life mentally crippled.

"A public meeting was called. Dinner was spread. Speakers of reputation were invited. The best ball players from each section of the district were pitted against a visiting team. Enthusiasm soared. All the youngsters were united in boosting the home team. They won. The victory made them all feel akin and paved the way for 'a get-together' meeting of the older people.

"More than five hundred words would be required to tell all that happened. We now have five acres of ground, centrally located, deeded to the district. A four-room house, painted white, stands near the public road. In a convenient corner of this little tract is a four-room 'teacherage,' which is now occupied by a splendid young man teacher and his wife who assists him in the school. The children think they are the greatest people in the world. The three acres now cleared afford

employment to the teacher during vacation and splendid opportunities for farm demonstrations in the teaching of agriculture. These teachers are not looking for new positions. They are satisfied. They feel that they are a part of the community and that their interests are identified with it."

I must leave it to these excerpts casually culled from the literature which the farmers are reading, to answer the reader who fears that the new kind of rural school will impoverish rural life by making it barren of poetry, song and literature. In the neighborhood described in the last quotation, we have a new sort of institution—a man, living with his wife in a rural neighborhood, devoting himself to the welfare of that neighborhood through the activities of the school—a new sort of pastorate.

People living in rural surroundings and served by schools of this sort suffer a sort of transformation in the matter of morale. Seeing the beauty, the harmony, the mystery of country life, they become proud of being farmers. Attacking their problems intelligently, they are no longer perplexed or confused by them, but look them boldly in the face. An esprit de corps is built up. We see the beginnings of a country life which needs

only age and traditions to exceed in beauty the much admired rural life of our mother countries. Rural plays have already been written and presented to delighted audiences of farmers. The country community with the coming of the new sort of school becomes alive; and being alive, it becomes attractive. In the absence of this vivification, there is little hope for permanent success in any scheme of land settlement which may be undertaken; but make it universally present, and the tide from country to city will turn to a current of population from city to country without any promoted policy of land settlement.

## XXIV

### A NEW KIND OF CITY SCHOOL

**I**T is impossible for the writer to conceive of any system of urban schools wielding the power, and exercising the dominating influence over the society under their territorial jurisdiction which are possessed by rural schools at their best. They are portions of a much more complex system of agencies; and they have more rivals and more powerful rivals in the field. Nevertheless, city schools at their best are exceedingly powerful factors in city life. By offering to the people meeting places for the free and untrammelled discussion of public affairs under some system of community organization, they serve the most valuable ends. They bring neighbors together out of the vast isolation of city life for the discussion of matters of common interest. They serve to further the efforts of a free press, and they take the place in no small degree of such a press when it unfortunately ceases to exist. They build up what cities so largely lack, local patriotism. They bring

all classes together, and thus not only weld together ordinary citizens into agencies for accomplishing common objects; but they make for the Americanization of foreigners by the only mode possible; giving them American objects to work for in cooperation with Americans. This they do in addition to their proper work of educating the youth of the city. The fact that in many cities the schoolhouses are used only as recitation and study rooms for children merely indicates that those cities are not living up to their opportunities. It is quite the same thing as if great public baths had been built while the population went filthy and unwashed. The school plant of every city should be used by the whole population by the taxation of whom it has been established, and for every public purpose for which people may legitimately come together.

The fact is that in most localities the schoolhouses are not used to anything like the extent which is advantageous. This has been shown with telling effect in Gary, Indiana, where under the superintendence of William Wirt, a method of utilizing them has been developed which has been pronounced by its coldest critics as a real discovery in educational affairs. That the system

has not become popular, and that it has not been extensively adopted, means nothing to its discredit; for nothing is more difficult than to move the educational system of America out of its rut. Neither is the fact of very great importance that efforts to introduce the system in New York have met with strong opposition. The efforts may have met with limited success owing to no inherent defect in the system, or they may have been successful and still have met with condemnation. The fact remains true that where the Gary system has existed longest, it has commanded the admiration of the people most concerned—those whose affairs have been affected by it—and has inspired them with pride. And in these days, almost any school system that possesses the power of commanding the interest and awakening the pride of the people is likely to be a departure in the right direction from the prevailing mode.

The Wirt, or Gary system, is an innovation in several directions. First, by establishing a school day longer in duration than the standard school day, it enables the school district to accommodate a larger number of pupils in the same set of buildings. The children themselves, by this system are given more time in the schoolhouse and on the

schoolhouse grounds for collective exercises and directed play. The school bulks larger in the lives of the pupils, and consequently in the minds of the parents. There is more time for physical training, for music, for all those functions which require the use of the gymnasium, the playground, and the platform. The moving picture and the lantern are used for both amusement and instruction in larger measure than in the ordinary school; and it seems inevitable that the sense of cooperation and collective action is developed.

The instruction itself is turned over to a large degree to specialists, even in the primary grades, who pass from room to room for instructional purposes. While this system might be objectionable if carried too far, it is a superior one on purely instructional grounds.

The greatest innovation in the system, however, lies in its sincere and to a large extent successful attempt to correlate the life of the school with that of the school of life. Manual and even trade training is given great prominence. In a large and growing school system there is much actual and necessary work to be done which is ordinarily turned over to contractors. Buildings are to be built, apparatus to be constructed and repaired,

grounds are to be improved, walks laid, electrical installations to be put in and kept up, fences to be constructed—a great deal is to be done which calls upon the doer to possess skill in many trades. In a system like that of Gary, which has always been behind the needs of the community in development, there is more work of this kind than would ordinarily be found in an old, well-settled, and fully-developed system, but tasks of this sort are always to be done, and the educational value to the pupils who are called upon to do them under the instruction of skilled teachers is very important. The cafeteria operated by the girls, and the other work which leads directly to home-making, is extremely important in a society in which the daughters of the people are suffering in their development from lack of household training, household tasks, and household “drudgery.” All the work mentioned above is used in the Gary school system as means for training the boys and girls. The effort is made to render the work of the pupils economically profitable, and with some success. After all it must be that the spirit, the soul, the psychological attitude of the school system toward labor, the logical position to which such a system drives the minds of the children, the position that



after all, this is a world of workmen and not of doctors, lawyers, orators, poets, writers, clergymen and other members of the "learned" professions, is in reality the best thing about the Gary system.

The psychology of most of our schools is wrong, and always has been wrong, in this very matter of the goal of education. Our Hampton Institutes, our Tuskegee Institutes, our reform schools, our educational institutions established for those on whom the founders look down in a patronizing way, have always been better than the schools in which our educators have worked along traditional lines, because we have always been willing to admit that those pupils should be rendered fit for actual work. As for our children, they must at least follow a course of study which looks toward white hands and cutaway coats, if not broadcloth, though ninety-nine out of a hundred of us know that such a beginning of a journey which can never be finished, is a fraud and a false pretense to ourselves, to society, and to those most concerned, the children denied preparation for the lives they must follow.

The Gary attitude is the most important feature of the system to my mind; for it corrects the false

psychology of the traditional school. This statement is made without underestimating the actual training in the Gary schools. The cooking of a few meals in the cafeteria, the serving of the food, the designing of a few garments, the actual sewing done on them, all these to a girl whose choice of employment outside of school hours lies between an ordinary apartment and the streets, may represent far more in determinative influence on life than most of us can imagine; while the doing of such tasks as repairing the heating plant, building drawing tables for the primary pupils, rewinding an armature, or installing the electric lighting system in a new school building may mark an epoch in the life of many a boy who is blindly wrestling amidst many temptations with the problem of what to do with himself. Even these things are mainly psychological; as in fact, all factors in the training of youth must be.

The city offers no such an opportunity for the perfect school as does the country. It makes more of its opportunities; but when the country awakes, the city must fall into second place educationally. In the first place to correlate city schooling with city life is an extremely complex problem, so complex as to be impossible except in its psychological

aspects; and even if it could be done, there is no city life which has the educational value possessed by rural life. In the country, there is but one occupation for the families, but one calling with which the school should be correlated; and this simplifies the matter enormously. That calling, however, is the richest of all in its purely educational values. It is richer in manual training than the city life; it touches all the natural sciences; it reaches out into business methods and accounting; it involves community organization. Everything done in the rural school is rendered more intensely interesting, because it affects the very lives of the people. It is too much to expect of any city school that it be as good as we ought to expect every rural school to become; but such schools as those of Gary are attacking the problem along most encouraging lines.

The fateful word for our future—for this era of reconstruction, not only in this country, but in the world, is labor. It is through labor that we must carry our burdens, bind up our wounds, and bring spiritual accord to the world. This is the mystic tree seen of old, "which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruits every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of

the nations." Said a statesman of a former generation, "The way to resume is to resume"—and the only way to reconstruct is to reconstruct. Make no mistake, the process of reconstruction will be long enough to enable us to make over our schools as a part of the process; and no reconstruction of society can take place which will be stable unless it is fortified by a better system of education. In spite of our progress, our system of education is aristocratic. In a world made safe for democracy, it must be democratic. It will never be democratic until it develops a new psychology toward Labor—the psychology toward which our better rural schools and such schools as those of Gary are struggling.

## XXV

### WHAT SORT OF PREPAREDNESS

**W**HAT shall we do in the matter of national defense and of preparedness for war in the future?

This is essentially a problem of reconstruction. The end of the war—if the armistice really is the end—finds the United States, as the end of the Civil War found us—a military power of the first class. Fifty years ago, and again now, we have shown our ability to take the field not only with forces of enormous numerical strength, but with a soldiery which in valor, in endurance, in intelligence, in resourcefulness, and in every quality that makes for victory is equal to the armies of any other nation; and in both instances we have put on the sea a navy which proves that if we are content to remain in a rank on the sea second to any other nation, it is only because we are content to do so. We have it in our power to become the first naval nation in spite of any efforts which any other power may make.

But we are not at heart a military nation. The very men who won the astonished admiration of the best soldiers of the world in the battles which finished the World War, are sick of the war, are impatient to doff the uniforms they have honored, and to go back to that civil life which they reluctantly left at the call of duty. Not a trace of professionalism has been built up among our soldiers; and if there was a single regret among them at the end of the war, it was caused by the passion for combat, and not by love of the soldier's life. "Get us home as soon as you can!" is the word that comes from the front; and the impatience of the men to see their native shores is only less than theirs of a few months ago for a sight of the banks of the Rhine. Soldiers and civilians are agreed in a great desire to see the end not only of this war, but of all wars.

Only a few days ago, however, the secretary of the navy said to a committee of Congress that, unless we have some guaranties against war as a result of the deliberations of the Peace Congress, the United States must build the greatest navy in the world. This, on the surface of it, does not look much like the end of war. And on January 16th, 1919, the secretary of war told a committee

of Congress that the plans framed by the War Department contemplate a standing army of 500,000 men raised by voluntary enlistment. This establishment according to the General Staff is expected to cost annually \$1,785,000,000, plus \$86,000,000 in the fortifications bill—provided that the wages of soldiers are returned to the fifteen-dollar-a-month base. This, at first blush, does not look as if the war to end war had accomplished its purpose.

In the meantime, the president is in Paris, working for a League of Nations which may make such establishments unnecessary. In the meantime, every nation which has objects to accomplish in opposition to this of setting up a world organization against mutual destruction, seems to have its cooperators among politicians and writers in America, and among the writers who have followed the president to Europe. Speeches are made by men high in authority for the apparent purpose of embarrassing the president; and a policy of dispraise, minifying, detraction and opposition has developed against him, at the very moment when he stands higher in the regard of the peoples of the world than any president of the United States has ever done, a policy which is

most puzzling to the ordinary citizen who wants the war ended forever, when it is ended, if such a consummation be humanly possible, and whose heart is with the man who is laboring for such a result, no matter what the prospects for success may be.

The most common explanation for the opposition in the press and in the halls of Congress to those policies of the president which will, if even moderately successful, make the grandiose and burdensome programmes of the General Staff and the secretary of the navy obsolete, is that we are facing a presidential campaign, and that from the view-point of partisan tactics it is necessary to raise the long howl which means that any quarry which stands between the pack and its victory must be dragged down and destroyed. It is not likely that this is more than half true. Those who are engaged in the work of trying to embarrass the president in his efforts to establish a new international system, are partly in his party, and partly in the opposition. They must know, too, that the average voter is for the League of Nations, for "a new deal," against the old balances of power, in so far as he understands the matter, and that given a little time, the voters are likely



to rally to the president's support if the opportunity is given them on a clear issue. They realize, too, that the president is serving his last term, and they would scarcely go so far to guard against so remote a contingency as a third-term ambition on his part. They may court a temporary popular approval in their insistence that peace be made first and the conditions of peace be worked out afterward, in order that the soldiers may be brought home at once; but they can scarcely expect much benefit from that contention. The opposition can not be fully explained on grounds of party advantage. It would seem more likely that some attacks on the president have been made by men who believe themselves to be serving party ends; but who are moved by other minds impelled by motives much farther below the surface. The diplomacy of the Old World—in fact, of almost the whole world—is as crooked, tortuous, selfish, and short-sighted when great principles are concerned, as it was in the time of Cavour or Metternich or Palmerston. The Wilsonian proposals for open as against secret diplomacy are opposed to who knows how many secret treaties, of the sort with which history makes us so familiar? Who knows how many difficulties are foreseen by these

diplomats when the time comes for either advertising these deals or abandoning them? In any case, the Wilsonian proposals require that the diplomats of the old, secret, subtle, cipher-writing sort legislate their profession out of existence. Such being the case, it must not be thought that these astute gentlemen will leave undone anything, either in Europe, in Asia, in South America, or in Africa, which will embarrass Wilson in his demands for getting rid of crooked and secret diplomacy.

Neither will they allow anything to be left undone in America! A party has been built up, in every nation on earth, in favor of the old-fashioned diplomacy. It is a party of professionals, who, doubtless, are unable to see how the world can get along under any new system, and who really believe that they are serving their countries by opposing open diplomacy. Their attitude is exactly that which would be assumed by the lawyers if the question were up of abolishing the legal profession. It seems clear that the opponents of the president in the press and in Congress, are, whether they know it or not, doing the work of this new international party, and are not acting, no matter what they may think of their acts, either

as Republicans, as Democrats, or as Americans. Whether they know it or not—for a study of the personalities involved will indicate, I believe, that the men who are thus indirectly working for the old system of secret diplomacy, balance of power, and great armies and navies, are of two classes: one class, men of excellent intelligence but of the old type of statesmen, and the other of small intelligence, immense conceit, and of extremely limited foresight.

The real issue is on trial in Paris, and not in Washington or in the various press coteries. If a League of Nations is set up it must be one in which power will be lodged somewhere for the disciplining of recalcitrant nations, in which some tribunal backed by force will exist by which the great nations of the world will for better or for worse emancipate the world from the armed truces which have passed for peace. If the plans for setting up such a league fail, we must face an era of preparedness, not of the old sort, but under conditions made necessary by the developments of the World War. The sort of preparedness which was advocated by those who in 1914 advocated universal military training or a large standing army is a cheap and simple thing compared with what

we shall have to maintain if we continue to go armed to the teeth.

Our preparedness must be more thorough, if we must be prepared, because the isolation of the United States in a military way is over. We have transported across the Atlantic a greater army than ever existed prior to this war; and what we have done our enemies can do. The ocean is a facility for the invasion of America, not a hindrance. The ocean gave us our isolation; and the narrowing of the ocean to the operations of ships, submarines, and aircraft has done away with our isolation.

Our preparedness must be more thorough, because of the heavier tasks which present-day war lays on any nation involved in it. War in the future will call for a regimentation of the people, an iron discipline laid on every citizen, an absorption of every energy, individual, manufacturing, transportation, agricultural, chemical, educational, and scientific, to which the German war organization can not be compared. Preparedness means that we must gather every destructive energy of the nation into a projectile to be hurled all at once at the foe. When Louis the Fourteenth took the field with a hundred and twenty thousand

trained soldiers the balance of power of Europe was disturbed; for no such head of power had been made by any captain since the days of the Roman Empire; but under present-day conditions of warfare, Switzerland, Denmark, or Norway might put forth an army of many times that number. In the days of Charles the First, if England had not revolted against his attempt to collect ship-money, he could out of the revenue derived from it have realized the desire of his heart and maintained a standing army; but in the future, a year of war will impoverish any people for a generation. For in the future war will be a monster far more fearful than was the war of 1914-1918.

War used to be a matter of infantry, cavalry and artillery. Now it has become so multifarious that no one not an expert dares try to describe it. It discharges projectiles until they constitute a wall, by machinery which is as automatic as the best tools of the factory. It demands more supplies per minute every day, and more complex and expensive machinery. It rolls great engines forward which are movable forts; and the tanks of yesterday will not answer for next year, nor the ammunition, nor the guns. It fills the air with

new and more destructive machines every day; and they fly farther, higher, remain in the air longer, execute more wonderful evolutions, carry heavier loads of more terrible explosives. Napoleon or Wellington or Grant or Lee could prepare in one year for a campaign to be undertaken in two, three or five years; but no such preparedness will do for us in the future, if we are forced to be prepared. The weapons and the engines of to-day may be obsolete next month.

The secretary of war speaks of building the greatest navy in the world; but does he or his experts know what sort of navy to build? It has been stated that the British perfected just before the armistice a flying boat which can rise above the greatest superdreadnaught, and diving straight at the vessel as a fish-hawk dives at a fish, discharge at it point-blank a projectile which will inevitably sink it. It is stated that these new engines of destruction were in attendance on the fleet which escorted the German warships to their place of surrender. These statements are undoubtedly true; because they are so inherently probable. The flying boat which can sink a warship can sink a merchant vessel, or can blow up a skyscraper in New York, Philadelphia or Chi-

cago after crossing the ocean or securing a base on this side. War has risen into the air, and seems likely to defy localization. Given the economic power, and there is no reason why Switzerland should not attack the United States with every prospect of success.

As the Great War went on, new and more terrible things were developed all the time. Ideas were presented to the army staffs which were rejected as too terrible. Poison gas would have exterminated the Germans by the hundreds of thousands next summer in accordance with measures already taken—gas which would have penetrated the German gas-masks. The reader will remember when his attention is called to the matter that in every war measure violative of the old ethics, the Allies allowed the Germans to introduce the device—poison gas, flame-throwers, and the like, and contented themselves by proceeding to develop defensive measures to meet it, and means of using it in a manner as effective as the German method or more effective. The Allies introduced no new things of this sort themselves. As a matter of fact, they knew things more destructive than any of the innovations of the Germans; and they suspected that the Germans might be as wise

as they. For instance, the spreading of disease so as to create epidemics was not resorted to. It was not thought wise to outdo the Germans in frightfulness, even as a matter of prudence, lest the thing should go out of bounds in uncontrollable horrors. But that there are such devices not yet used which are capable of use, there is no doubt. Whether any navy or any army can be of any use to any people in actual war in which all the agencies of destruction are put to use now known or embodied in principle in things known may be seriously questioned. The preparedness which the League of Nations would seek to make unnecessary, is preparedness against known dangers of the most daunting nature; but it would also save us from a future full of unknown perils, as much more terrible than the ghosts and goblins of ancient superstitions as phosgene gas is worse than the miasma of the graveyard.

Success in war in the future must always be a matter of economic and industrial development; and it would not seem impossible to secure the adhesion of the nations possessing a high degree of such development to a League of Nations for the abolition of war.



## XXVI

### THE WEST POINT SYSTEM EXTENDED

**N**EVERTHELESS, who is there who is not an extreme and logical pacifist, such a pacifist as were those Quakers of old who carried their pacifism to the degree of non-resistance under all circumstances, who would at this time vote for the disbanding of the army, the dismantling of the navy, the amendment of the Constitution so as to drop the secretary of war and the secretary of the navy from the cabinet, and the abandonment forever and at once of all military and naval establishments and all measures of national defense and military preparedness? Unless we are willing to go to that length, we must go on with the army and navy to some extent and in some form.

Even though a League of Nations be established, which shall set up some sort of control over war-making, that League must rest on force; and the United States as a member of it must expect to be called upon to supply her share of that force in case of need. The force most often referred to

as a means of controlling the recalcitrant nation or people, is economic force; the nation to be controlled to be cut off from communication with other nations, ships to be restrained from entering her ports, postal systems to be closed against her, railroad service stopped at her frontiers, and wire systems cut there. These measures, taken for the maintenance of peace, would require armed forces, on land or sea or both to put them in effect. There seems to be no way for us out of the dilemma of preparedness; even though the old art of war be undergoing basic changes, we must so far as can be seen, hold ourselves ready to practise it under certain circumstances.

What is an American soldier? He is a boy or young man who has given up his freedom to the United States government, for a certain time, and for certain rewards. The reward proposed by the General Staff is fifteen dollars a month for the lowest rank—fifteen dollars a month and found; and on this basis an army of half a million will cost the government about two billions a year. Most of us remember when the country was horrified by its first billion-dollar Congress; but when this army is in being every Congress will be at least a six-billion-dollar Congress. The army bill alone

will be four billions for each biennium. We shall pay out this sum to keep half a million young men and boys in the employ of the government as soldiers.

I submit that if this is done the country ought to get something out of it besides the loss to her industries and to their families of half a million young men and boys. The young men and boys ought to get something out of it more than fifteen dollars a month, or any other sum of money. A soldier is in the hands of his government. His time is spent as the government, speaking through his officers, says it must be spent. The experience of this war proves that a man working under discipline can do about three times what he ordinarily does, working in the absence of discipline. The testimony of the average officer is that in civil life men work up to about thirty per cent. of their highest efficiency. A soldier can learn everything that makes him a good soldier, and in addition he can learn a trade, or a profession, or an occupation. If he is illiterate he can learn in a year more of the three R's than he was expected to learn in five years of primary schooling. If he is a West Point cadet, he can take a full college course in four years, and in addition he can learn

(1) all a private soldier needs to know; (2) all a corporal needs to know; (3) all a sergeant needs to know, and (4) all a commissioned officer needs to know. The psychological basis of the United States army is the assumption that being a soldier does not absorb all a man's time. It rests upon a system of instruction at West Point under which the teaching force is a separate and distinct force from the military command. Extend the West Point system to the organization of the whole army, and it at once becomes, not an agency for absorbing the time of one out of every two hundred in our population in mere soldiering, but of systematically preparing one person in two hundred for greater usefulness in the life of the nation.

The United States, when it takes a boy or young man under its management, drills him, controls him, makes him over, ought to be able to give him something of more value than fifteen dollars a month—or any other number of dollars a month. It ought to be able to give him something for which he would be willing to serve without wages.

There are hundreds of thousands of boys growing up in the United States in a state of woeful illiteracy. In some parts of the country these

boys often walk long distances to some place where a school is established, and arriving without money, labor at anything they can find to do while acquiring the rudiments of learning. These could be given an education while serving as soldiers—an education adapted to the lives they must live when they return to their homes, a vocational education, an education which would be the best of credentials to any one to whom they might apply for work, and which would make them leaders in the betterment of their native neighborhoods. I think it would be a splendid thing if the United States should adopt the policy of conscripting into the army every illiterate boy of eighteen, so as to bestow upon him the priceless gift of the mastery of the printed page. It would not be necessary to pay these boys anything. They should be supported—and educated.

There are in the United States millions of foreigners who can not read or write the English language—many of them young men. There are some theoretical objections to the practise of making soldiers of foreigners; but no one knows what they are until war breaks out, whereupon it is discovered that the objections apply to a part only of the natives of the nation with which war is

being waged: hence these objections may be waived. The objections to the foreigner who lives among us without knowing the language of the country, can not be waived, however. Wherever a community is found composed of foreigners, and of such a size as to prevent or hinder assimilation with the people of the country, a place is found between which and the sentiment of the nation a strange barrier exists. Though the community may have existed for generations, there is still something queer about it, even though the patriotism of the people be unquestionable. The people are not quite Americans, not quite en rapport with the American people. To every young man of this class, whether recent immigrant or encysted foreigner of long residence, the United States government could do itself and him a favor by putting him in the army for the purpose of mixing him up with Americans, and teaching him to read, write and speak the English language. I think it would be well if the United States government would put in the army for this purpose every young man who needs this sort of education. No foreigner who lacks command of English should be naturalized; and the nation should teach him both the language and the principles of Amer-

icanism while he is serving a term of enlistment in the army. Unless he is willing to conform to such a requirement he should not be naturalized.

I have mentioned two classes of men, their ages running from the lowest compatible with military service up to say thirty-five, who represent two elements of national danger and national neglect and discredit, the illiterate English-speaking youth of the nation and the unassimilated foreigners; because every mind must assent to their claims upon us and our claims upon them; but the plea which I am making is far broader. It is nothing less than this: That the power of the nation to command the services of our young men as soldiers shall be used, not for the mere purpose of marshaling a certain military force, for the sole purpose of national defense, but for the good of the young men themselves, and for the improvement according to a systematic plan of our citizenry. Under such a plan we should have an army, probably a better army than we have ever had; but it would be a by-product of an educational system. The army might never be needed. Every one hopes that it may not be. But these young men are needed for action on a higher plane than they can ever occupy unless something is

done for their minds, and to an equal degree to their bodies. The old-fashioned army will always be unpopular with a vast mass of the people; but the army maintained for citizenship training would always be able to justify itself in the court of public opinion. It would be an army which would function every day and every year in beneficent ways; and it would take in men from every community. The illiterates and foreigners would make up a very small portion of it.

Look about you at the young men of your acquaintance. How many out of every group of two hundred of the population do you see who for one reason or another would be benefited, and who are aware that they would be benefited, by a year of educational training, vocational or general? Here is a boy who has mastered the lineman's job in working for a telephone or telegraph company. He begins to see that his general education will never permit of his becoming an electrician or an electrical engineer. The work of the Signal Corps of the army correlated with the right sort of a class-room drill would in a year or so turn him out equipped for the life toward which his newly-awakened ambitions are turning. Here is a street railway employee who finds himself barred from



promotion by the fact that he left school after passing through the third primary grade. Here is a helper in the power plant of a great factory, who longs to be a full-fledged stationary engineer; and he is struggling with a correspondence-school course through which he is making little progress. He would be glad to serve a year or so in the army so that he might obtain a discharge showing him capable of taking charge of those great engines the mysteries of which he is only beginning to suspect. Here is a boy who wishes to enter college, but is backward in his studies. Here is one who is feeling his way into the field of accountancy; another who wishes to become a skilled contractor and builder; another who would be happy if he were an armature-winder, a good lathe man, or a plumber. Vocational training is the thing which is scarcest in America. The army might go far to supply this lack.

I have spoken thus far of the army only in this connection; but the navy is equally important in any system of either national defense or national vocational and general training. Indeed the navy has already become a great training-school for the arts of peace. In the army, too, the multifarious demands of modern war for technical and strictly

occupational skill have forced it to take on the functions of a great training school. The system for which I argue has germinated in the soil of war. All that is needed to make it a great boon to the peaceful interests of the nation is systematization according to the needs of the nation for men and the needs of the men for training—systematization into an educational system with incidental military and naval use, rather than a military and naval system with incidental educational utility.

The army and the navy constitute a system which offers opportunities for vocational and general training which are astounding in their multifariousness and completeness. One can scarcely think of any vocation, trade, or occupation for which a man may not be systematically trained in the army or the navy. It will be remembered that in the Gary system of schools an attempt is made with a good deal of success to correlate the education with life, and to make use of the work of the school system itself as a means of giving the children vocational training. The limitations of the system lie in the fact that in a city school system there is not enough work to be done, and not enough sorts of work, to meet the demands of the pupils for exercises.

But how different is it with the army and the navy! The nation needs skilled designers, superintendents, foremen, and workers in metals; and the army needs arms, ammunition, every sort of thing which calls upon its maker for mechanical skill. The nation needs road engineers and road-makers; the army and the navy need roads. The nation needs seamen; the navy can train them. The nation needs trained farmers to produce pork, beef, grains, fibers; the army and the navy need the meats, grains and textiles. The nation needs skilled men to prepare these things for consumption—to kill, cure, grind, bale, card, spin, weave, dye, and otherwise make natural products ready for use—the army and navy need the completed products for their own uses. The nation needs skilled chemists and employees for chemical works; the army and navy must do or have done the very things the doing of which will train men for these national needs. Make a table of the occupations, trades and vocations which are most in need of men in the United States, and I venture to say that it will be found that the army and the navy in supplying their own needs might train men for every one of them.

Let no one think that I favor the working of the

army as a disciplined force of producers competing with other labor, selling its products in the markets, and disturbing industrial conditions. Not at all. Let the army and the navy be conceived as self-contained units of population, which shall make use of the demands of these units for goods to train their men in every phase of producing these goods. Let the army and the navy actually produce the goods needed by the army and navy, build their buildings, manufacture their equipments and supplies, do their own work, using the work educationally for the training of men for life outside the army and navy. Let them use this work for educational purposes; but let them supply themselves with everything so far as possible. Accepting the estimate of the General Staff as to the size of the army, this would put into training in the army one person in every two hundred in the United States, while the navy would take, perhaps, one in three hundred. These men, so far as conditions of service would permit, would mine, smelt, fabricate, grow, preserve, finish, manufacture, transport and generally do everything necessary to be done from horse-ranching for the cavalry to gun-smithing for the Ordnance Department, so as to make the army and navy industrially suffi-

cient unto themselves. Doubtless they would fall short of being sufficient in all things, since the work would be done with the training of workers in mind, rather than mass production, and all the productive work would be done in addition to the regular drills and military exercises of soldiers and sailors.

Yet, the productive powers of the army and navy under such conditions must not be underestimated as a possibility, nor should it be regarded as a small matter in its capacity to reduce that enormous expense which the estimate of the General Staff may lead us to expect if we continue to maintain the forces on an unproductive basis, buying in the open market and from contractors whatever is necessary for the keeping up of the military and naval establishments. The mere matter of wages, to which reference has been made, is not the controlling one in any military estimate. The traditional status of an army or navy is deplorable in its effects on the men, on the taxpayers, and on the industries and the politics of the nation. The men waste their time in waiting for an eventuality which every good citizen earnestly hopes may never come to pass, and rust out as members of society; they are put through drills and exercises

to an extent quite unnecessary for the acquirement of military skill, because it is necessary that they have something to do no matter how useless; their wages are not high enough to tempt any young man except those who fail in the competition of industrial life, and the army therefore becomes the refuge of the weakling and the misfit. This is not good for either the army or the nation. On the taxpayer such an army or navy lays an onerous and it would seem an unnecessary burden. Although much of the time of the soldiers is spent in idleness or what amounts to that, the supplies must be bought in the open market and paid for out of taxation. In the meantime, the business of making and selling to the army its supplies becomes an industry, corrupting to our institutions, and divisive of our people; for under such circumstances, there will always be protest and opposition among the people, not to the army, but to the burden of maintaining it, and revolt against the profits of the contracting industry. If the time wasted in such an army be made use of in producing the supplies of that army, and the work be so planned as to be educative of the soldiers themselves, the burden of keeping up the establishment may be enormously decreased, and the industrial

power of the country may be greatedened instead of lessened whenever a man is discharged.

Such an army or navy ought not to find itself obliged to resort to conscription, save for the purpose of reaching classes of men for their own good and the good of society, who fail to respond to the attractions of army or navy opportunities. Such an army should be able to compete with civil life in bidding for the best young men in the United States. It should compete by making its courses attractive. It should take men in for short periods of enlistment, not less, however, than one year, and should rely on its attractiveness for re-enlistments and its recruits. If the army consists of no more than five hundred thousand men, it should always have a waiting list—and would have if properly organized, properly taught, and made as much a matter of pride to the nation as it might be. Once make the honorable discharge from the army equal in significance to a diploma or a certificate from a technical or other school of high order, and the industries of the nation will make it worth the while of the young men to enlist and serve.

In the idea itself of making use of the time of soldiers and sailors for their own advancement

and the accomplishment of purposes of supply and equipment, there is nothing new. All that is needed is that the practises which have been made successful in this war be systematized and made as nearly universal as is consistent with the actual service of some units in policing and other duties. The post schools of the pre-war times were not as a rule a success, though there were some interesting exceptions to this rule; but they were not a part of the system, they were insufficiently supplied with a teaching force; and they seldom had a chance to succeed. The army should be given an opportunity to become a vital part of our national life by serving in peace as well as in war. The old West Point corps of officers have done wonders in this war, in building a new army of enormous size in a few months on the slender skeleton of the old organization. We are proud of the efficiency of our army, which expanded in a short time to a point which made it impossible for the average company to possess any officer who had not been a civilian a few months before taking command; we are proud of the almost uniform skill and efficiency of these new army officers; and knowing that in a few months most regiments would pass from the command of the old West Pointers to that of



colonels and lieutenant-colonels of the new army, we were calm, because we trusted these new officers. But we must not forget that it is to the original nucleus of West Pointers that we owe this result. They devoted themselves with splendid energy and self-sacrifice to the task of training the young officers, many of them destroyed their health, and it is to them as much as to the fine fiber of the young officers themselves that we owe the splendid result. And now the old West Point personnel has the opportunity of giving us a new system which will save out of the experiences of this war its most valuable military lesson, will give us a constant supply of just such young officers as they developed in this war, will furnish us with a growing body of trained reserves, will establish the army as an integral part of the industrial and educational forces of the country, will greatly lessen if it does not completely destroy the opposition to the army, will continue to make use of so many of the training camps as are needful to the new purposes of the new army, and will give us an educated as well as a trained military force sufficient to all our needs through all the future.

## XXVII.

### AN EXPERIMENT IN GENERAL TRAINING

**I**N the state of Wyoming, for several years, there was carried on a system of citizenship and physical training through semi-military games and competitions, which is well worthy of more of the attention of educators and of the people of the country who are interested in education than it has yet received. Not that it has been quite neglected; for it was for a short time established in the public schools of the city of Washington, and is, partially at least, a part of the public school system of Chicago. It was, however, in the high schools of certain towns of Wyoming that it received its best test and its most perfect development, under the superintendence of Lieutenant (now Colonel) E. Z. Steever of the United States army, the originator of the system. No development of our educational system contains more hints of betterment for the mental, the moral and physical morale of the youth subjected to it than the so-called Steever system.

While semi-military in character, the system is democratic, and is devoid of those elements of discipline and rank which are objectional to so many people who fear the building up of a military spirit and a military caste. The boys elect their own officers. There are no military titles. There are no personal prizes. All prizes go to the squads into which the schools are divided, and each member of the squad is entitled to wear whatever insignia belongs to any member. There are no corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, or captains but the corresponding officers bear such titles as squad leaders, assistant platoon leaders, platoon leaders and the like, and, as has been stated, are elected by the members of the squads themselves. It is not claimed by those favoring the system that officers should be elected by soldiers in actual war, but it is urged that for the purposes of this system such a practise is not only practicable, but that it affords some of the best education offered by the system, not only for squad and platoon purposes, but for citizenship training, and that the boys actually learn to elect quite as efficient a body of officers as could be selected by the most skilful superintendent.

The basis of the system is competition between

squads. The membership of the squads is determined by the boys themselves through a system of "choosing up" similar to that in vogue in the old-fashioned spelling school. Each squad, therefore, is made up according to the judgment of the boys themselves. Let us assume that two squads are being made up in wall-scaling, one of the games included in the system. The first boy chosen will be the most skilful in that exercise. The second best will go by choice to the second squad; and the last boy chosen, who has been left to the last by reason of his lack of activity and skill, will be conscious of the fact that in the other squad is another boy of similar lack of desirability to the wall-scaling squad. The thing is fair and if one squad greatly outstrips the other, it will be because of better judgment in its selection or better leadership, for both of which results the boys themselves will be responsible, and both errors will be susceptible of cure when the next redistribution of boys is made as to squads, and the next election of officers is held.

Competitions are carried on in scholarship, in ordinary military drill, in wall-scaling, in shooting, in camping, and in troop leadership. The memberships of the squads are different for all

these activities: the wall-scaling squad is made up of an entirely different lot of boys from the scholarship squad, and a tail-ender in the shooting squad may be the squad leader in the troop leadership squad, and is quite likely to be associated in the same camping squad with boys opposed to his wall-scaling squad. Thus, while the system has been described as an organization of the gang spirit in boys, it carries the gang system only so far as is necessary to accomplish the objects sought, and as a matter of fact, it breaks up groups, and causes the boys to mingle in a very complex system which tends to break down almost every sort of caste separation.

The scholarship squads merely introduce squad competitions in the ordinary work of the school, based on whatever system of markings may be used. In view of the fact that the squad membership crosses the lines of the ordinary school classes, this system enlists the sympathy and assistance of the entire squad in the school work of those who have difficulty in keeping up, regardless of whether the pupils taking such interest and extending such sympathy are associated in the same classes or not. The tendency of this system is not only to promote better class work, but to make the

class work of each pupil a matter of public interest in the school. These competitions are not in any degree military except to the limited extent determined by the squad organization.

The wall-scaling squads afford the most excellent physical training. The exercises consist in scaling walls with gun and accouterments, and records made by squads in the Wyoming schools are incredible to the uninstructed. When one considers the lack of systematic physical training in most of our public schools, the introduction of a game of this sort, in which every boy in the school may take part, who is not physically incapacitated—an athletic game for all the boys, and not for athletes only—such a system will not be underestimated as to its importance. The only doubt one might harbor would be as to whether or not the game can command general interest. The wall-scaling contests must be approved when so tested. Not only did they excite great interest among the pupils of the schools in which the squads were organized, but the public exhibitions were quite as well-attended as are such games as basket-ball, and intercity contests were eminently successful. The wall-scaling contests grew into first-page importance to the newspapers.

Less importance was attached to the drills of the squads organized for military drill, than to the wall-scaling contests. Nevertheless, the skill attained was quite as great as is considered necessary for good military companies. These competitions are of a more military character than the wall-scaling; and they have great value in physical training. No one who has seen the slouchy boy of 1917 return from camp erect, alert, and bronzed, can fail to give to drill some value as physical training. Its military value is considerable, but is likely by many to be overestimated.

The shooting squads developed not only intense interest, but remarkable average skill in the boys. The military value of rifle shooting as an exercise for schoolboys is of unquestionable value to the country; especially when it is remembered that all the boys took part who desired to do so. This exercise also has value as a part of any system of physical training.

The camping squads added to the out-of-door character of the system, and camping competitions emphasized everything which is necessary in a good camp—sanitation, order, discipline. So long as wars are carried on out-of-doors and in camps, skill of this sort can not be of small military value.

The work of troop leadership squads is difficult to describe to the civilian mind. In some respects it involves instruction of the sort given in military schools of advanced grade, the post-graduate work for graduates of West Point, for instance. Some of it is done out-of-doors, and some on military maps. It takes in map-making, map-reading, simple surveying, and generally the handling of a troop in reconnaissances, scouting, and other military operations. It appeals to the out-of-door intelligence, and to the sense which for want of a better term may be called the military sense. It is a training for leadership, be it remembered, and puts on each boy certain responsibilities. No work done by the boys in this system is more appealing to the boys themselves, or arouses deeper interest. While it is preponderantly of military value, it is stimulating to the intelligence, and can not fail to show great general educative value.

Each squad chooses a girl, who is the patroness of the squad and wears its medals and insignia. A successful effort was made to develop the social side of life, and in the language of Colonel Steever, while the manual of arms is taught, the manual of the knife and fork is not neglected. The leveling of ordinary social distinctions by the democratic



manner in which the squads are chosen and officered, coupled with the feminine associations, and the billeting of the boys on their journeys to other parts of the state, upon the families of the citizens of the towns visited, tend to a development of real democracy. The system might be greatly developed in the interests of the physical training of girls, and that behind-the-lines support of the armies which has been found so important in war. An effort is always made to build up a fine sense of honor among the boys—something for which we have hitherto had no systematic agency in our public schools. This system tends to develop a soul in the public school, an out-of-door spirit, physical fitness, democracy, the responsibility of all for each and each for all, and a very important approach to military preparedness.

I have the estimate of persons who are in position to speak advisedly because of their familiarity with both military affairs and the Steever System, to the effect that if we had had this system in operation in our public schools for a long enough time before the Great War to have affected our young men generally, we could have had an army in the field in one-third of the time which it took to prepare our present army. In other words, we

could have been in the field in the autumn of 1917, instead of the summer of 1918. We could have prevented the great German victories of the spring of 1918 which nearly lost the war to the Allies. In marksmanship, in drill, in camping, in all the rudiments of war the young men would have served their initial training, and been ready for the training which makes a recruit a finished soldier. Educationally the men would have been presumably better educated, and in physique they would have been far better; and the development of officers would have been immensely more rapid. All these things we should have had without any great expense and as a matter of general educational training.

So far, the system has not been worked out for the rural schools; but in so far as it is of benefit to town and city schools, it would be still more beneficial to the rural schools, which suffer from isolation and from the lack of interesting activities.

A standing army would have enslaved the English speaking peoples, as it enslaved the continental peoples, had the English kings been permitted to establish such an army prior to the development of responsible government; but no country has

ever lost its liberties through a generally disseminated military skill among its people. Such military preparedness as is to be found in the home training of our youth is opposed to despotism and the encroachments of absolutism. I think, therefore, that this interesting system should be studied and developed by our public men and our educators. Whether we shall ever fight again or not, one can see no danger in any system which shall make our boys hardy, shall train them for leadership, shall nurture them in the art of shooting straight and telling the truth.

This system of training will meet the same obstacles to recognition which have been encountered by the ideas of all other educational reformers. The conservation of the school authorities and of the teachers, from the college president to the rural pedagogue is usually successful in defeating any rapid progress. Already the system is said to have become almost obsolete in Wyoming—but that in the light of educational history, is no argument against it.

## XXVIII

### THE REAL PROBLEM BEFORE US

**W**HETHER or not we shall in the future be forced to wage war or defend ourselves against attacks, is after all a matter over which we can have little control. We live in a world which has been shaken to its foundations. Forces have been liberated which we can have no means of measuring, and the tendencies of which are probably not yet apparent to any one. Whether the world has been made safe for democracy is yet uncertain. Whether or not it has not been rendered unsafe for everything most peoples have held dear is a question which has occurred to many. Democracy itself has been attacked, as it appears even to many radicals, by forces emanating from the people themselves in the new thing called Bolshevism. Whether Bolshevism is in essence opposed to democracy or not, it has declared war on all the institutions by which the oldest and most successful democracies of the world have made and secured their progress,

and if called upon to accept it or oppose it, most men in English-speaking nations, whose liberties are derived from Magna Charta, the Petition of Right, the Bill of Rights, the Habeas Corpus Act, trial by jury, the rule of majorities, and all those safeguards of freedom which have been the foundation of their liberties, will battle against Bolshevism to the death. In view of the fact that Bolshevism declares its purpose to overspread the world, the choice of fighting it or accepting it is one which the Western peoples may one of these days be obliged to exercise in tumults and commotions and civil war.

Preparedness for war, therefore, is perhaps not so important as preparedness for things which may come upon us out of the midst of the most profound peace. Its form of government is the set of tools with which a democracy works; and that very conservatism which makes men fond of the kind of plow or lathe or fountain pen to which they are accustomed, makes them cling to governmental agencies with which they are familiar, and to the use of which as citizens they are habituated. It is only when a large body of citizens become convinced that these tools will not work that they come to the decision that they should be thrown

aside; and those who have never tried to make them work and are unfamiliar with their uses are those most likely to say in their hearts that the machinery of government should be junked for whatever new device may be recommended by any Lenine or Trotzky or Liebknecht who may come along with a catchy selling talk. And that is exactly what Bolshevism, and that sinister movement in this country which is less constructive than Bolshevism, really demand: that all our present governmental machinery be junked, and a new plant installed. This is the sort of proposal to which we of the Greater Englishry have never yet brought ourselves to consent, and to which we never will consent unless our majorities become convinced through experience that our institutions will not serve the purposes of the Greater Democracy to the accomplishment of which we have now set ourselves, or unless a large proportion of our people cease through discouragement and disgust to try to make them work.

The great contest to-day seems not to be between autocracy and democracy, but between the tried democratic methods of the Greater Englishry of the United States, and the British Empire and the short-cuts and new governmental inventions of

Eastern Europe. These innovations are brought forward in the name of democracy, but hitherto they have rapidly run the course followed by the French Revolution, and have already reached a condition of anarchy tempered by a military despotism drenched in the blood of the intelligent classes. The Greater Englishry has faced time after time situations similar to those of France at the meeting of the States General, and Russia at the downfall of the Romanoffs; has faced them, and passed safely through them by a process of compromise and adjustment. "This is the Year One," is the slogan of the continental peoples in such a crisis; and on the theory that old things have passed away they proceed to destroy and build anew. "This is capable of adjustment," is always the view of the Greater Englishry, "if we can force the king to call frequent parliaments, if we can make him agree not to levy taxes without the consent of parliament, if we can have liberty of speech and of the press, if we can have trial by jury, if we can take away from him the control of the army, if we can put in practise a Habeas Corpus Act, if we can name his advisers, if we can make those advisers responsible to the people, if we enact a Bill of Rights, if we can abolish slav-

ery, if we can separate church and state, if we can establish independence in case of denial of our right to representation in the body that taxes us, if we can put the public lands in the hands of the general government so that new states may be carved out of the public domain, if we can set up a Supreme Court to weld the colonies together into one nation, if we can secure election of senators by vote of the people, if we can get the initiative, the referendum and recall, if we can secure an easier way of amending our Constitution, if we can free the land to industry, if we can put proportional representation into effect, or if we can establish universal suffrage, we can pass this danger. This situation is bad, but it is not as bad as it looks," says the Greater Englishry in any great crisis. "The old ship leaks, but she floats. She has weathered many a storm as violent as this, and she will weather this." And she always has weathered it.

The governments of the Greater Englishry are constantly rising on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things. Their institutions are scrolls written over and over again until the original lines never erased, are lost sight of in a maze of amendments, developments, qualifications and



evasions. Once most of the people of England were villeins as low in estate as were the serfs of Russia in the time of Peter the Great. No law was ever enacted abolishing villeinage; but the institution has so long been forgotten that it is the boast of every navy that Britain is "a free country." Originally, the president of the United States was chosen by electors exercising for the people an intelligent judgment which the voters were not supposed to be able to exercise for themselves. Now, though the old form persists, the will of the voters has become binding on the electors by the force of public opinion. So does this sort of government grow. In view of the fact that while many of the greatest minds of the world have invented systems of government supposedly perfect, none of which, as we can see in the light of experience, could possibly have worked, and that some of the most intelligent of the peoples have tried to begin history anew and declaring it to be the year one have instituted systems of invented government, none of which have succeeded, and seeing that the methods of the Greater Englishry have brought to the peoples living under their patchwork governments for centuries a greater degree of prosperity coupled with a larger

individual freedom than any other system ever gave, and that Nature herself does not build her continents and scoop out her oceans by cataclysms, but rather depends upon the patchwork of æons to make the soil for an orchard, is it not reasonable to infer that the governmental methods hitherto pursued by the Greater Englishry are Nature's methods, and that any departure from them will be a departure from the laying down of soil for better things toward the burying of all prospects for good under lava-caps and scorixæ which themselves must be subjected to the frosts and rains of time before they can become capable of bearing fruits of freedom and justice? Our system constantly moves onward and upward. The processes of development in government are no more logical than are those of geology.

Impatience with the slow processes of governmental development is natural, and unless there were all the time some who are impatient, and at times many, our progress would be slower than it has been. Impatience has been growing in the minds of millions for many years. We have achieved much for the common man, but the great goal of industrial and economic freedom has not yet been attained. He has been given liberty of

speech and of the press, religious liberty, personal liberty in the abolition of slavery and villeinage, but every intelligent man knows that as the grosser and more obvious forms of servitude have been abolished, subtler and more concealed forms have taken their places. It is for this reason that such a gospel as that of the Industrial Workers of the World has found a hearing and made converts. It is for this reason that the flame of Bolshevism in the eastern sky is regarded by some as the light of a new, even though it be a bloody, dawn, rather than the glare of a destructive conflagration.

In this consideration of some of the problems of reconstruction, I have dwelt first on the necessity of measures which will prevent unemployment, and keep wages from falling so as to press down the standard of living. This is no time for bread-lines and woodpiles, and municipally operated soup kitchens. It is no time for the employers "to have it out" with labor. There is too much at stake. It is a time for concessions, for adjustments, for an intelligent understanding between labor and capital, and between the public and each of them. Hitherto we have always accepted majority rule, sooner or later, and lived according to the governmental traditions of the Greater Eng-

lishry; and for a thousand years that system has worked well. Again we are likely to face demands for shorter cuts and new inventions which will take the place of majority rule and constitutional methods. Bolshevism with its occupational division of society, the I. W. W. with their policy of destruction by the direct action of the few for the purpose of seeing what may be developed from the ruins—these views are forms of impatience with our institutions, so far as they have been received here—an impatience which is acute enough now, and which if exacerbated by a drastically lowered wage scale, or serious unemployment may become so widespread as to surprise those short-sighted conservatives who have expressed the belief that now is a good time to have a show-down with the forces of radicalism.

In addition to these purely temporary devices for keeping away from a labor and industrial crisis, I have laid most emphasis on measures for giving the people something more from their government, and upon educational measures which will make more and more people conscious that the government is a part of their lives, to be studied, labored with, worked upon, amended, perfected, thought about. What we need more than anything

else is a moral reconstruction. The adult population is in this less important than the youth, and the men less important than the women. Give me control of a proper system of common schools in Russia for twenty years, especially of a system of rural schools, and I will undertake to make that struggling people prosperous, free politically and industrially, and as quiet as Iowa. Give to the people of the United States a two or three decades during which every other effort shall be subordinated to one great policy of making education what it ought to be—education in city and country, education for American and immigrant, education for child, youth and adult, and he who lives to see the fruition of that time of effort will find that our branch of the Greater Englishry will have passed another mile-stone in its history, will have again surmounted great obstacles and achieved great triumphs. It will have solved the one problem which has hitherto baffled it. It will have given the common man, not only freedom of speech, not only freedom of the press, not only personal liberty, not only religious liberty, but economic liberty. And for that sort of reconstruction two or three decades is a very brief time indeed.

THE END

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